



ACTION CALL ON BANK CLOSURES

Report by Pam Kingsley

COMMUNITIES will suffer and businesses will be put at risk if the rules over allowing the last bank in a town to close continue, politicians have warned.

The warnings come as a public meeting is due to be held tonight (Thursday) to discuss the shock announcement that HSBC will close its branch in Chirk – the town's only bank.

The announcement follows confirmation late last year HSBC will also be closing its branches in Llanfyllin and Llanfair Caereinion, which in each case are again the last remaining banks in the towns. Banking bosses failed to commit to a policy of ensuring the last bank in a community remained open despite Government negotiations last year.

Instead, banks agreed to rules setting out a series of steps they must take before closing branches. Susan Elan Jones, Labour MP for Clwyd South, said: "We've seen bank after bank close and yes, of course it's the fault of HSBC, but also the Government. The local banks are really saying go to Wrexham or Oswestry, but for some people that's not possible."

Action

"While I will of course meet with HSBC and present any petitions or other representations from town and community councils in Parliament, I think we have to recognise that what is needed here is co-ordinated national action."

"If the Government doesn't act now, our small town and village high streets will suffer even more than they have so far."

Chirk businesses owners say the loss of the bank will have a devastating effect on the town, with a petition being started at M G Hughes Fruit and Veg shop. Julia Glover, who owns The Hair Shop on Colliery Road, said: "Chirk is supposed to be classed as a town, so how can we not have a bank?" Keeley Parkinson of the Milk Bar cafe on Church Street next door to the bank said: "It will slow business down and could kill the town. It's going to be a nightmare for us and we'll go to Oswestry instead. We don't have a card machine as it's easier for people to pay by getting change from the bank next door."

HSBC is writing to customers advising them of the closures and making staff available to talk through alternative ways of banking. Staff from Chirk will be transferred to other branches. The branch will close on April 8, as will the HSBC bank in nearby Ruabon.

A public meeting is due to be held at the Parish Hall in Chirk at 7pm this evening to discuss the closure. A meeting is also due to be held in Ruabon tomorrow. Simon Baynes, Welsh Conservative Assembly candidate for Clwyd South, said: "We are pleased to be working with people locally in both communities in organising these public meetings which will give an opportunity to local residents and businesses to express their worries."

● Reluctance – See Page 5

Records book to change after twins' challenge



Twins Jo Baines and Heidi Gannon were left puzzled by an entry in the latest Guinness Book of Records. Photo: Alan Evans.

THE Guinness Book of Records is having to change a record in its latest edition after it was challenged by twins from Welshpool.

Sisters Heidi Gannon and Jo Baines were both born on September 23, 1976 but ended up being born in different countries with Heidi being born at 9am at Welshpool Hospital and Jo following at 10.45am after their mother was transferred to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital due to complications.

So it came as a shock last week when Heidi's 11-year-old son William was reading the Guinness Book of Records when he noticed an entry about twins born in 1976 who supposedly held the record for being the first set born in different countries.

According to the book, Dylan and Hannah

Fox hold the record for being the first twins born in different countries in 1972, with Dylan born in Northumberland, England, and Hannah born in Scotland, having required more specialist care following complications.

Surprised by the entry, the sisters contacted the Guinness Book of Records to inform them the Fox twins were not the first to be born in different countries, and little more than a week later they have had a response.

Dr Nancy Segal, the consultant who produced the twin piece that appeared in the 2016 edition, has apologised and has said the piece will be corrected.

Youngest twin Jo said she was pleased with the news.

She said: "This is more than we expected or

really wanted." She said their main concern was that it was not correct and was surprised that the Guinness Book of Records hadn't done the research fully as the twins hit the headlines at the time in a number of national newspapers as well as the Chronicle's sister paper the Shropshire Star.

Jo said despite having a normal pregnancy throughout, their mum Carol Munro didn't know she was carrying two babies.

Jo said: "Heidi was born and then they realised I was on the way."

"Mum was rushed to Shrewsbury due to complications and I ended up spending time in intensive care after a forceps delivery for four days then we both stayed in hospital for another six days after that."

WEATHER

Homes evacuated after flash floods damage properties

RESIDENTS have been left counting the cost after their homes were damaged when heavy rain hit the Oswestry area.

The "freak flash" of rain saw homes evacuated and firefighters spend around five hours tackling flooding at properties in Prince's Terrace in Ruyton-XI-Towns on Tuesday night.

Crews from Oswestry and Baschurch were dispatched to the scene, with pumps required to clear the properties.

The fire service was initially called at around 8.40pm with an ambulance also providing help after an elderly man was found in one of the properties.

The man was rescued from the top floor of his home, as he needed manoeuvring down a tight staircase.

Fire crews also tackled a spate of other flash flooding incidents late on Tuesday. Oswestry factory Traditional Products was flooded at around 11.30pm.

One fire crew from Oswestry attended the incident and used sandbags to divert what they described as "large scale flooding" to a nearby culvert.

Meanwhile, a woman and two children became stranded after their car got stuck in flood water at Weston Rhyn near Oswestry. They managed to free themselves from the vehicle before firefighters arrived. They were treated at the scene for cold and shock after getting stuck at about 7pm on Tuesday.

● Flooding – See Page 3

COUNCIL

No reduction in councillor posts

THE Welsh Government will not reduce the number of county councillors in Powys, it has been announced.

Already in financial crisis, Powys County Council was depending on cutting its expenses bill through the recommendation to reduce councillors from 73 to 64.

But the Welsh Government has now said that electoral reviews carried out by the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales in nine areas will not be implemented.

The decision means that the council will have to find an additional £175,000 a year from April 2017 until at least 2020.

INSIDE

New bike racks boost for town



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Medical practices 'could close' warns health chief

Report by Naomi Penrose

MEDICAL practices could close as increasing workloads mount pressure on already stretched doctors, a health chief has warned.

Dr Ian Rummens said general practice in Shropshire and across England and Wales is in a state of crisis due to recruitment problems and ever growing workloads, causing high stress levels among medical professionals.

Dr Rummens, who is secretary of Shropshire Local Medical Committee and a partner at Cambrian Medical Centre in Oswestry, said many doctors are retiring as early as 50 or leaving GP practice, and not enough are being recruited to take their places. He said: "It's a combination of workload and pressure on general practice.

"Another problem is the number of graduates in general practice has fallen. There used to be such competition, whereas now when medical students are interviewed they may not be interested in general practice or if they are they are, they are looking to go overseas, for example in New Zealand, Australia, Canada. It's the situation in general practice today I'm afraid."

Dr Rummens said current statistics reveal that 35 per cent of GPs intend to retire in the next couple of years. "All it takes is for someone to retire or go off sick and that practice is then destabilised and struggles to cope with the workload," he said.

The GP pointed to the closure of medical practices in Machynlleth and Llanwrtyd Wells in Mid Wales as a sign of what was to come.

He said: "We can see that a crisis is coming. A couple of practices have been close to closing in Shropshire but haven't yet, but it's going to happen in the next 12 months. This isn't just a Shropshire problem, this is nationwide.

"Let's say for example my practice folds tomorrow, that's 12,000 people who no longer have a GP which then ramps up pressure on the surrounding surgeries."

According to Dr Rummens, a number of factors have added to GPs workload including an increase in the number of frail and elderly people with long term conditions and an increase in transferring work from hospitals to general practices.

Dr Rummens gravely warned that "fundamental changes" need to be made in order to remedy the situation.

New cycle racks installed in town centre



Deputy Mayor Paul Milner takes a look at some of the new cycle racks

OSWESTRY is becoming more cycle-friendly after new bike racks were installed in the town centre.

The racks have been put in after calls for more secure places to leave cycles.

Oswestry's Deputy Mayor Councillor Paul Milner said: "It's really to encourage people to bike into town rather than use their cars.

"They can then leave them in secure places which are covered by the town's CCTV.

"Also we had some racks before, but they were only in groups of up to three, which

was no good if you want to cycle in with your family.

"If people want to bike into town now they don't have to worry about making sure their bikes will be safe or having somewhere to leave them.

"We're trying to get a cycling route around Oswestry and when they come into town they should be able to put their bikes in a secure position."

"The cycle racks we had before I don't think were in the right position.

"They weren't secure and they weren't under CCTV, and bikes are expensive."

The new racks have been put in outside the town's market hall on the Bailey Head as well as in the Central Car Park.

There are eight sets of racks, providing space for 16 cycles to be secured.

Members of Oswestry Town Council were asked to look into providing more cycle racks around the town in September.

The suggestion was met with approval from all members, with several giving examples of times they had met cyclists in the town who had asked for better places to leave their bikes in a safe place in Oswestry town centre.



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Chance to give a hug to hillfort

THE history of an historic Iron Age monument will be celebrated with a 'hillfort hug'.

Following the success of the hillfort hug last Valentine's Day, people are invited to visit Old Oswestry hillfort on February 13 and 14 to join in with this year's event.

The Old Oswestry hug weekend will also include a heritage symposium, an evening of music and performance, craft workshops and art installations. Campaign group Hands Off Old Oswestry Hillfort will be hosting a full day symposium in Oswestry's Memorial Hall on the Saturday when invited speakers will explore the site's archaeology and heritage landscape as well as modern-day planning threats to it.

The hillfort hug will take place from 1pm on Valentine's Day, ending with a procession along the ramparts with lights and drums.

Diana Baur, who is helping to organise the hug, said: "If hillfort huggers, adults and children, would like to make a home-made drum and a simple light to carry at the hug procession, we will be running workshops at Hermon Chapel in early February.

"We will be confirming workshop dates on the Old Oswestry Facebook page. Alternatively, just bring your own light and improvised drum."

Last year's event attracted more than 450 people.

Misuse of bridge will be reported

RESIDENTS in a village say they will take action after a lorry was seen crossing a fragile bridge.

Landrinio bridge has been given a weight restriction after being damaged in the recent floods.

Resident Tim Heeley said he spotted a lorry crossing the village's damaged bridge, despite a 7.5tonne weight restriction being in place due to safety concerns.

He said he will be reporting the incident to police after taking down the vehicle's registration number.

The bridge was closed just before Christmas with concerns that it may collapse, but reopened a few days later to lighter vehicles after stringent checks.

Powys County Council engineers are continuing to monitor the bridge, which straddles the River Severn and provides a vital link for cross-border traffic.

Crews called out to tackle flooding

FIREFIGHTERS worked through the night to help residents after being called to what has been described as a "freak occurrence" of flash flooding in a village near Oswestry.

Properties in Prince's Terrace in Ruyton-XI-Towns were swamped by the water.

Fire crews were called out on Tuesday evening and used pumps to clear the water, with the crews completing

their efforts at around 2am yesterday (Wednesday).

Incident commander Guy Williams said residents had said they hadn't seen such a "freak occurrence" of weather in 50 years.

Mr Williams said water which had come off the fields into roads had caused the problems.

He said the water had gone straight through the courtyard of the terrace,

through the terrace and into the properties.

"We had to get into six properties and isolate their power, and then advise residents to move out or upstairs while we assessed the rising water," he said.

Firefighters had to divert water, using two pumps – a light pump was set up in the field, while the main pump was at the end of the terrace.

He said: "Residents will now be looking to get insurance out assessing the damage. I know some residents were making other arrangements to leave their homes while this was happening." Mr Williams said the high volume of calls kept the fire service busy and having to prioritise calls.

Police also attended and reported that flood water was three feet deep in places.

Farmer Bryan used to seeing swamped fields

Report by Sue Austin

FARMER Bryan Edwards admits allowing himself a wry smile when David Cameron announced farmers could be paid to allow farmland to be flooded to save towns downstream of rivers.

For ever since he and his family moved to Pool Farm at Melverley near Oswestry his fields have often lain flooded as part of the Severn flood plain, allowing the control of the volume of water going through Shrewsbury and beyond.

But he and other farmers haven't had a penny compensation.

This week his fields will have been under water for seven weeks, as rain belt after rain belt has crossed Britain in one of the wettest and warmest winters on record.

Mr Edwards says the flooded fields are part of the annual routine – is the time of year when the fields lay 'rested'.

But the flooding does cause issues, especially if it continues for an extended period.

His beef cattle remain inside during the winter months, not let out onto the grass until April, so crops are not getting ruined.

He said: "This is the longest the floods have remained for many years. Usually after two or three weeks it drains back into the Severn through the flood gates at Pentre." As a parish councillor and chairman of the Melverley Internal Drainage Board Mr Edwards and colleagues campaigned long and hard for improvements to the drainage system. They were able to see the 'argaes' – man made flood defences dating back to the 18th century – built higher and also get new outlet gates that allow water back into the river.



Melverley farmer Bryan Edwards is well used to coping with flooding. Photo: Alan Evans.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Councillors at centre of probe

THREE councillors have been referred to the Ombudsman following comments allegedly made at a Royal British Legion club meeting.

Estelle Bleivas, Heather Chave and Hazel Evans could face an investigation following an assessment of the complaint. It has been claimed Welshpool town councillors broke the authority's code of conduct. The complaint to the ombudsman stems from a meeting of the Welshpool branch of the Royal British Legion in November. A Public Services Ombudsman for Wales spokesman said: "I can confirm the Ombudsman has received a complaint against three Welshpool town councillors – Councillor Estelle Bleivas, Councillor Heather Chave and Councillor Hazel Evans – concerning whether they have breached the council's code of conduct. The complaint will now be assessed before a decision is taken on whether the matter should be investigated." None of the councillors nor the RBL club were available for comment.

Old leisure centre to be redeveloped

OSWESTRY'S former leisure centre is set for redevelopment after a housing organisation confirmed it is looking to build on the site.

The centre on College Road closed in 2011 when it was replaced by a new facility on Shrewsbury Road. The Wrekin Housing Trust has now confirmed it is looking to develop the site.

Since closing the site has been plagued by problems including fires, break-ins and fly tipping. Police warned people to stay away from the site in 2014 amid fears the building had been used by people sleeping rough or by children playing.

Arsonists were blamed for a fire in the building after rubbish was set alight, causing smoke damage. And last year parents were asked to warn their children about the dangers of playing in empty buildings after a number of incidents in which children were found inside the old centre.

Crews attend blaze

A HOME suffered smoke damage following a fire which started in a first floor bedroom.

It happened in a house in Hillside, Oswestry, at about 6pm on Saturday.

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service said two other bedrooms, stairs and the upper floor were all damaged by smoke.

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MP remaining confident turbines fight will be won

Report by Pam Kingsley

CAMPAIGNERS fighting against plans for two large scale wind farms have been given a fresh boost.

Montgomeryshire MP Glyn Davies said he has held top level talks with Energy Secretary Amber Rudd over the potential re-opening of a planning inquiry into the wind farms.

Mr Davies said that following the meeting he is confident the "battle is not lost."

Plans for five wind farms were thrown out by the government last year, but two of those applications have been called back by Ms Rudd. If the applications are approved it could lead to a power line being put in from Lower Frankton near Oswestry to Cefn Coch in Montgomeryshire.

Complaints made over rally driving

POLICE have been asked to speak to organisers of an international rally event held after reports of race cars driving dangerously on the roads.

The Wales Rally GB took place in November, with 78 cars competing in the international rally and 88 crews contesting the national event. On the Friday evening drivers on the A483 between Welshpool and Chirk found themselves in illustrious company as the cars headed up the trunk road to the RallyFest stage at Chirk Castle.

But police said they have now received complaints about the behaviour of the rally drivers on the roads.

PC Kate Le'Clere, who covers Weston Rhyn, said she was aware that there had been issues with reports of dangerous driving by the competition cars.

"I was told of an apparent incident during the rally when a rally car overtook on the Chirk Bank canal bridge - which is a dangerous blind bend.

"If I get the opportunity to speak with event organisers this year, I will certainly mention it," she said.

Drivers also complained about the way the rally cars were driven on the A483 as they overtook queues of traffic.

Margaret Hall, from Bronygarth Road, Weston Rhyn, said: "I know they're supposed to be some of the best drivers in the world, but that doesn't mean they can drive like idiots on the road.

"They should still stick to speed limits and be careful in traffic."

Pylons would be installed through the countryside to carry most of the line.

But Mr Davies said: "I can understand the concern of those opposed to multiple wind farms in Mid Wales and the proposed massive power line from North Shropshire to Cefn Coch in Montgomeryshire about the current position.

"No decision has yet been taken about whether to re-open the public inquiry, which will add further to the delay, and greatly to costs - which will eventually be borne by energy users.

"Personally, I'm relaxed about this. The previous inspector actually recommended approval and perhaps a new inspector might be persuaded to recommend refusal.

"It's important that no possible excuse can remain for these absolutely determined developers to continue with their terrifying threats to Mid Wales."

After the Carnedd Wen and Llanbrynmair proposals were refused, the developers decided to seek a judicial review into the process by which time the decisions were reached.

The secretary of state considered the position and judged that the best way forward was to quash the decisions and reconsider them.

"It's important to understand the actual status of these two developments," Mr Davies added.

"They were part of the conjoined public inquiry into five wind farms plus a 132kv power line which took place over nine months from 2013 to 2014 and were refused by the secretary of state in September 2015.

"Such controversial decisions must be dealt with scrupulously fairly and as transparently as possible," Mr Davies said.

"I accept that the secretary of state must give full consideration to these two applications. I also hope that after due consideration she will come to the same decision as she did in September."

Half marathon to aid hospice



Joe Williams with his son Harry

JOE Williams and his family have good reason to be grateful for the work of Hope House Children's Hospice near Oswestry.

Joe's three-year-old son Harry suffers from a rare form of epilepsy which means he needs round-the-clock care from his parents. Harry has just had his second visit to the hospice where he has respite care. It gives Joe and his girlfriend Lucy the chance to spend quality time together and also catch up on much needed sleep.

As a thank you, Joe - whose company UKRunchat has taken over Shrewsbury Half Marathon for 2016 - has arranged for the hospice to be given dedicated places for runners to take part in this year's run and raise money for the charity. Joe, who has

two older children, said: "I can not explain just how wonderful the hospice is. We are so grateful for the time that Hope House gives us as Harry needs 24-hour care.

"We as a family have so much to thank Hope House for and I wanted to give something back through the half marathon."

Lynsey Kilvert, area fundraiser for Hope House, said that the hospice was very grateful to Joe and his family.

She said: "I am sure people will come forward to take up the places for the Shrewsbury Half Marathon and run the 13.1 miles for the hospice." To take up a half marathon place runners will have to pay a reduced registration of just £20 and pledge to raise at least £100 for Hope House.

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Bank closure move taken with 'great reluctance'

Report by Pam Kingsley

BOSSES at the HSBC bank say they made the decision to close their branch at Chirk with "great reluctance".

The branch is Chirk's only remaining bank and the decision has been condemned by politicians and business owners.

Mabon ap Gwynfor, the Plaid Cymru Assembly candidate for Clwyd South, said he was very concerned about what the closure could mean for customers.

Mr ap Gwynfor said: "The community served by this bank will be reeling from the news that HSBC is planning to close its branch there."

"This decision will undoubtedly have a detrimental effect on this community, especially local businesses, the elderly and those on low income. What's worse is that the bank cites increased online banking as one of their reasons for closing."

Jonathan Byrne, regional director of HSBC, said: "We have made this decision with great reluctance, but after a careful analysis of the branch's commercial viability it was clear that it is no longer generating the custom necessary to justify its continued operation."

"Customer banking habits have changed dramatically in recent years, with many customers now using branches where they work or using the 24 hour convenience of telephone, mobile and internet banking. In response to these changing patterns we need to ensure that our branches are in the right locations and we invest in the development of our internet and mobile facilities. Unfortunately that means that we sometimes have to close branches to ensure our network remains fit for purpose."

"Our main priority will be to ensure that we are aware of any difficulties faced by our customers and that our customers' banking needs will be catered for in the best possible way. We will take steps to proactively contact customers who may have problems accessing alternative banking facilities. In these cases we will offer them one-to-one appointments to provide customers with advice and practical solutions, including training on phone and internet banking where appropriate."

HSBC will also close its branches in Llanfyllin and Llanfair Caereinion on February 12. Councillor Peter Lewis, county councillor for Llanfyllin, said such closures were having a "devastating effect" on surrounding villages. He said: "Not only does a bank closure lead to increased distance and travel time to nearby branches, but many retail businesses say local spend follows banks to larger communities."

NEW evidence suggests a teenage army recruit found dead more than 20 years ago was being sexually exploited by senior ranks shortly before she died, a hearing has been told.

Lawyers representing the family of Private Cheryl James, whose parents live near Llanymynech, want the scope of a new inquest into the 18-year-old's death at the Deepcut Barracks in 1995 to be widened to take account of new testimony which they said sheds new light on her state of mind.

Alison Foster QC, representing the teenager's family, told a pre-inquest hearing at Woking Coroner's Court on Monday they have material suggesting Cheryl "may have been sexually coerced or raped the night before, or before the time of her death."

Pte James, 18, was found with a bullet wound to her head in November 1995 when she was undergoing initial training at the Surrey barracks.

She was one of four soldiers who died at the barracks between 1995 and 2002 amid claims of bullying and abuse.

A fresh inquest was ordered into Pte James's death after High Court judges quashed an open verdict recorded in December 1995.

It is due to start in Woking on February 1.

Coroner Brian Barker QC said he would make a written ruling on whether to widen the scope of the inquest in the next few weeks.

Action over canal pollution



Water being pumped into the Montgomery Canal. Photo: The Canal & River Trust.

WATER has been pumped into a section of a canal to tackle an issue with pollution.

Environment Agency workers have been at Aston Locks along the Montgomery Canal, near Oswestry, to get oxygen back into the waterway after being alerted to fish in distress.

The source of the pollution was traced back to a nearby farm. However, the cause remains unknown and an investigation has been launched. An Environment Agency spokeswoman said the fish were no longer in distress.

She said: "The Environment Agency received a report on January 6 of fish in distress due to a pollution incident stretching for one kilometre along the Montgomery Canal, near Oswestry."

"Our teams immediately attended the site and began oxygenating the canal, which increases oxygen levels in the water for the fish and other aquatic life."

The spokeswoman added: "The source of the pollution has been traced back to a nearby farm and we are working with the landowner to stop any further waste from entering the canal."

The Canal & River Trust also assisted with the investigation.

Helen Hall, of the Canal & River Trust, said: "Working with the Environment Agency, the trust is pumping water back into the canal to get oxygen back in the canal."

"The Environment Agency is currently investigating the cause of the pollution."

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BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

Just when it was looking like the heat was off his party Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn threw in what the cricket world would describe as a "no-ball" by appointing Emily Thornberry as Shadow Defence Secretary this week. It's only just over a year since the Islington MP was forced to resign as Shadow Attorney General after tweeting images of a white van parked outside a house draped with England flags which she hinted portrayed the people of Rochester. Even Labour's then leader Ed Miliband said the tweet "conveyed a sense of disrespect".

She certainly fell foul of the political "umpires" then but returned to the "crease" this week when Mr Corbyn returned a favour – she was one of his backers in the leadership contest.

To say the appointment of Ms Thornberry is controversial would be an understatement. A bit like saying Sir Geoffrey Boycott was an average batsman. Her elevation to such lofty heights is as incredible as her own reaction has been. How many readers saw her being interviewed on TV? The lady admitted she had no idea whatsoever as to why Mr Corbyn had chosen her for this most crucial role. But even Jeremy Corbyn must have been amazed when she bowled her next "googly" – claiming she had been made an honorary colonel while working as a legal representative at military court hearings. A human rights barrister before entering politics, she made the claim after senior military figures and MPs challenged her job credentials and she was accused of lacking any knowledge or experience of military matters. Now she has herself been clean bowled with newspapers reporting that Ministry of Defence sources said there was no record of Ms Thornberry being given honorary rank in respect of her work in the courts. So just where does that leave Ms Thornberry and indeed just where does it leave Mr Corbyn? You could hardly describe Prime Minister David Cameron's team selection as faultless but the Labour leader may be forced to ask his new Defence Secretary to field on the boundary. It's hard to believe that these are people hoping to govern our country. Might it be time to declare already Mr Corbyn?

Wanting to know where to get a drink of water, lost house keys and being faced with a scary hedgehog were some of the three million reasons people dialled 999 in the last 12 months and asked for help from the West Midlands Ambulance Service it has been revealed. Little wonder that the authority has launched an awareness campaign aimed at highlighting the shocking number of inappropriate calls to an already overworked service.



Lembit Opik pictured with fellow Liberal Democrat Charles Kennedy during his spell as an MP



Lembit Opik has been told his jaw will have to be re-set as part of the surgical procedure



The ex-MP has appeared on various TV shows including I'm A Celebrity...

Former MP Lembit faces up to next big challenge

Lembit Opik will soon be undergoing major surgery. AMY DOWNWARD finds out more

LEMBIT Opik has already starred in a music video, taken part in a wrestling match and made television appearances on various reality shows since losing his seat in the 2010 General Election.

And now the former Montgomeryshire MP is preparing to undergo serious facial surgery.

The former politician is awaiting an operation to put right damage caused in a paragliding accident back in 1998.

It is a big step for the 50-year-old, who jokes that the changes made to his face will make him look "like George Clooney".

Lembit, who was Montgomeryshire's Member of Parliament from 1997 to 2010, is now on his third career to date.

He is currently the director of communications and public affairs for the Motorcycle Action Group, a volunteer-led riders' rights organisation that campaigns to protect and promote motorcycling and the interests and rights of all riders.

A keen motorcyclist himself, he says he hopes to continue in his current role working with the group this year.

He said: "I am very happy where I am. I am enjoying the job and the challenges. It is an interesting role.

"I do miss Parliament but you have one life and I want to do as much as I can. "I lost my seat and that is fine – I would have liked to have been in Parliament longer, but I have got to do a lot of things since.

"I am very grateful for the amount of experience I have had. I have had three careers."



Lembit Opik is to undergo reconstructive surgery on his face

Lembit now bases himself in London, but says he continues to be drawn to Shropshire and Montgomeryshire and visits when he can.

"I miss the peace and quiet and the beautiful countryside," he said. "It still very much feels like home."

County Down-born Lembit became leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats in 2001.

Since then the politician has made a number of television appearances on shows like Have I Got News For You, I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here, Loose Women and Come Dine With Me.

"I would like to do more TV work," he added.

"I have enjoyed the programmes I did – they were fun,

"I don't want to change the world; I just want to enjoy life. You have to remember the TV world isn't real, but I do really enjoy doing TV and radio work."

In recent years he has also appeared in a pantomime, done stand-up comedy and even took part in a professional wrestling promotion.

In 2012 he appeared at Welshpool Town Hall in front of hundreds of wrestling fans.

He had teamed up with Iestyn Rees to take on 18-stone Kade Callous and Bison Brody.

But a side-crunching slam and a choke hold ended Lembit's bout early, with the 20-minute match ending about 15 minutes in.

He was taken away by members of Llanfyllin St John Ambulance on oxygen with suspected broken ribs.

Lembit is now preparing himself for his next immediate challenge – surgery to "put his wonky face right" after the paragliding accident in 1998 that saw him fall 80ft.

During the accident on a Montgomeryshire mountain, Lembit broke his back in 12 places, as well as his ribs, sternum and jaw.

This month Lembit, who has had high-profile romances with one half of the Cheeky Girls and weather girl Sian Lloyd, will finally undergo a six-hour operation on the NHS after waiting more than four years.

He said: "On April 13 1998 I had a near fatal accident where I broke my back in 12 places.

"It made my face a lot more wonky and also affected how I ate.

"I am having the operation because I can't eat properly – not for cosmetic reasons. I have lost a lot of teeth.

"My teeth are in such a state now that I can't really eat anything that requires effort.

"My teeth have been disintegrating and I am a slow eater. It got so bad I went to visit an expert who said my jaw needs to be re-set.

"I am hoping it will be one operation and that I am only out for action for a few weeks.

"It has got to be done. It is a small price to pay for my life being saved."

Lembit spoke of his debt to medicine in Shropshire who treated him immediately after the accident, adding: "I owe my life to the care I received after my accident. Staff at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital saved my life.

"I also received fantastic care at the hospital in Gobowen. I can never praise the NHS enough. The NHS is exceptional.

"I am grateful I didn't get any bigger problems.

"I'm now looking forward to being able to eat without pain and hassle after my op." Lembit will have his operation at London's St Bartholomew's Hospital at the end of this month.

WORKING FOR YOU



I write this column as travelling on Eurostar, en route for a briefing about EU perspective on energy/climate change issues in Brussels. I've no doubt discussions of this sort will become the dominant issue for all of us over the next few months as we approach the EU Referendum, probably sometime this summer. But today I feel the need to clarify where we are with wind farm and power cables in mid Wales and North Shropshire. There has been some concern following a recent Government announcement about two wind farm proposals.

Let's recap. Through 2013/14 a huge 'conjoined' public inquiry was held in Welshpool to consider six appeals by wind farm developers against refusals of planning permission by Powys County Council. On September 7, 2015, the UK Government effectively refused permission for all of them. Most developers accepted this position, but two of them – in an act of utter determination to get their own way – sought judicial review of the decisions. The Secretary of State is determined to be seen as acting fairly and objectively and has agreed to reconsider the two decisions. This involves 'quashing' the two original decisions. I share the Secretary of State's commitment to transparency and fairness.

So what will happen now? It's not yet wholly determined. At this stage we do not know whether the inquiry will be re-opened. I cannot see why the developers would want this, because the inspector recommended approval of their proposals.

It was the Secretary of State who refused them, against the inspector's advice. I thought the inspector was wrong. He has now retired, and I'd be hopeful of persuading a new inspector to take a different view. But the Secretary of State may decide total transparency requires the widest possible reconsideration. We will have to await her view on this.

Whatever the outcome of all this, we know that none of these wind farms will have access to any subsidy, which they have always been dependent on. Perhaps they are hoping for a more compliant government sometime in the future! We also know that they remain dependent on the Mid Wales Connection Project which has led to so much National Grid-inspired distress across our area. The inspector's report remains the same. The facts before the Secretary of State remain the same.

I am very hopeful the eventual decision will remain the same, and the terrible black cloud that has hung over Mid Wales for years will finally be blown away.

Glyn Davies
Montgomeryshire MP



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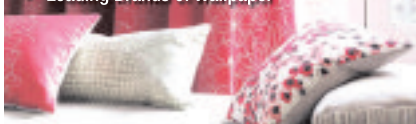
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Puzzled by council's fighting fund

REGARDING the article about Telford & Wrekin Council having £100,000 it had 'put aside' and would be used by the council to campaign to keep the A&E at the Princess Royal Hospital.

I would like to ask how they managed to put aside £100,000?

Especially as councils are cutting back on everything.

There are people using foodbanks and having to decide on whether they can afford to eat or put the heating on.

Councillor R Overton is quoted saying they remain clear in their position - of keeping the A&E - Telford is the area's

main "population centre" with the most pressing health needs - would they be able to cope with a busy A&E as well?

The solution must bring forward a viable financial solution for the hospital - says it all - 'we are in it for the money' comes to my mind!

Telford & Wrekin wanted out of Shropshire County Council years ago and got their wish, then they or Shrewsbury Hospital decided to join together, a partnership which should never have been allowed.

They should both have their A&Es kept open and health departments that have been closed should reopen to save people

with minor injuries going to them instead of the main A&E departments.

Plus minor injury units that are open now should take on as patients people who have been advised to go to them instead of A&E by their own doctors and consultants, irrespective if you are or are not in their health area.

So keep both A&Es open for the safety of people needing a nearby A&E - not having to travel miles out of the area.

Remember, time is of the essence.

JENNIFER ASTLEY
St Martins
Oswestry

These policies mean we are a nation which is now divided

SINCE this Government came to power we have got a divided country between the rich and the poor. The poor are being penalised by having cuts to their monies which are coming through next April.

The disabled are having cuts to their monies and having to pay the bedroom tax. The elderly are in care homes that are being closed down, care services are being cut back and there is not enough care workers to help. By 2020 there will be no services left, only private ones.

The NHS is being run down so the Government can sell off the best bits to their mates in the City. Waiting lists are growing month on month, instead of saving lives they are saving money, lives come last, but at least the banks are growing faster.

Child poverty figures are being manipulated by the Government to hide the true figures. Now if you live in a council house they are trying to limit your stay in one to five years. Poverty among the rest is going up and up yet we have £12 billion being paid to other countries in aid to help stop poverty and hunger. Why don't they help their own people first who are living in poverty?

Cameron, since coming into power, has not done one thing for the working class, even those who are working will suffer under the cuts. He has not kept one promise yet. Lie after lie is all we get. He fudges everything he does, he is not a leader he is frightened of his own backbenchers.

JOHN RUSSON
Highley

Shop workers get a raw deal

I WRITE this letter on the behalf of the wonderful folks who serve us in shops and supermarkets in Shropshire.

I would like all their customers to know we are here to help you.

We would like to make your shopping easy and a pleasure.

However we have found you think we are serfs and can be insulted with impunity.

Your attitude to us is quite appalling. We provide this service with pay that is a disgrace.

Supermarket employers ensure we are not paid more than the minimum.

It is time that employers started to take care of staff.

It is time they stopped having to ask tedious questions of customers simply trying to pay for their purchases.

The fact is that the people of Shropshire you are a disgrace and do not deserve the service we provide.

I would like you to know on Christmas Day we were working to stack the shelves so that you could rush in on Boxing Day as you have nothing better to do with your money.

And on New Year's Day we were still working.

G T INWOOD
Shrewsbury

Copper collection raises tidy sum for church



Members of the 1st Gobowen brownie pack spent the first three months of 1980 collecting their spare coppers in empty drinks cans. Towards the end of March the 23 filled cans were presented to the Vicar of Gobowen, the Rev John Allen, for the fund to rebuild the parish church, gutted by fire the previous December.

Hillfort should be given protection against housing

TWO news reports in the Shropshire Star on December 18 indicate that Shropshire Council adopts double standards when it comes to conserving the county's heritage with an apparent bias in favour of protecting the interests of the county town.

For example, while the headline story indicates that the authority has done everything in its power to successfully prevent the demolition of The Stew in Frankwell, an inside item reports that on the other hand the planning committee through the adoption of the SAMdev plan is quite prepared to allow the residential development of a site which will seriously prejudice the setting of Oswestry Iron Age Hill Fort. While The Stew may be of some local historic interest, its value as a county heritage asset pales in comparison with Old Oswestry which is of national if not international significance. It is also an iconic landmark clearly visible to the many travellers passing by the town along the A5 trunk road.

MICHAEL HUGHES
Shrewsbury

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

EU directive on dredging

CUMBRIA is well used to heavy rainfall and occasional flooding. What neither Cumbria nor its residents can handle are directives from Europe.

Ever since the 2000 EU decision to ban dredging of rivers in the UK we have seen the instances of flooding increase dramatically. The river authorities in this country have long been capable of dealing with our rivers and constantly dredged them to stop floods.

ADRIAN WILLIAMS
Bratton

Quick point about fuel used in launch of spaceman Tim

UK politicians of almost all parties lauded an international summit in Paris, in which the bête noire was "fossil fuels"!

Even the sons and daughters of former British coalfields slagged off coal, even though it was that same coal that paid for them to go through university to study waffle. "Hooray for the end of the carbon economy", cried the sons of coal miners.

Now, the same UK politicians are jumping on the bandwagon in praise of a heroic British spaceman. They all cheered and waved their Union Jacks as a Russian rocket powered our own Major Tim Peake into space.

It was conveniently forgotten that his rocket was powered by "300 tonnes of kerosene and liquid oxygen" evil - soon to be scrapped - fossil fuel!

So, can we look forward to rockets being launched into outer space powered by energy from wind turbines in this marvellous carbon-free future? Imagine it.

What a joke.
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Crew called to tackle flat fire

A FIRE broke out in a flat after a frying pan was left unattended. Firefighters attended the small fire at a flat in Willow Street, Oswestry, shortly after midday yesterday (Wednesday).

The fire happened in an elderly woman's first floor flat after cooking was left unattended. Two crews from Oswestry were mobilised, who used breathing apparatus, a covering jet, hose reel jet and positive pressure ventilation to tackle the blaze. The crews left the scene shortly before 12.25pm. Adrian Bowen, Oswestry Fire Station crew manager, said the elderly woman was "fine" following the fire and was able to stay in her property.

He said: "There was a slight haze of smoke but we managed to get the fire out on arrival. The lady was okay thankfully."

Mr Bowen also said the fire only caused a "small level of damage".

He added: "We just want to reiterate the message to the people of Shropshire not to leave any cooking unattended."

School site could soon be on market

A VILLAGE primary school which has been empty since it was closed in 2012 could soon be sold by Shropshire Council.

Maesbury School was shut as part of Shropshire Council cutbacks which saw several primary schools across the county close.

Shropshire Council now intends to request a Disposal of Land order from the government's Education Funding Agency for the empty school building.

If successful, it will allow the authority to market the sites for future development, which could be as soon as Easter.

Residents would 'pay more to save services'

Report by Pam Kingsley

RESIDENTS in Welshpool would prefer to pay more council tax than lose services such as public toilets and car parks, a survey has found.

People said they would be happy to pay more each year if the area continued to enjoy public services.

Welshpool Town Council carried out the survey as it bids to take on a number of services from cash-strapped Powys County Council.

Services currently run by the town council include the town hall, markets, playgrounds, the country park, public toilets, the day centre, meals on wheels, tourist information, CCTV system and allotments. The town council is also responsible for events including the air show, carnival and Christmas lights.

Welshpool town clerk Robert Robinson said: "The financial position of Powys County Council has resulted in many cuts and reductions in services delivered by them."

"The town council has been asked to consider taking over public services which resulted in this survey being carried out."

"The survey was to identify which services are important and which should be taken over from the county council to enable the town council to make informed decisions on future service delivery."

Of the services currently run by the town council, the survey revealed that residents felt the public toilets, CCTV, tourist information and day centre were the most important. And there was wide support for the town council to take over the running of the car parks, street scene - which includes street cleaning and litter bins - local bus services and recycling.

Golf club raises cash for good cause



Louise Dawson from Lingen Davies Cancer Fund, James Woodward, Emma Woodward and Keith Probert

A GOLF club has raised almost £10,000 for charity after holding two special event days.

The events were held at Oswestry Golf Club and were organised by club captain Keith Probert.

He had nominated the Emma Woodward Appeal, which supports the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund at

the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, as his chosen charity for his year in office.

He said: "We organised two fund-raising golfing days. The first was a joint event with Janet Williams, the club's lady captain, and the second was brilliantly organised by club member James Woodward and his

family, together with other volunteers."

"Both events were a great success. The total money raised from both days was £9,710, which will go towards the cost of a new linear accelerator for the delivery of radiotherapy at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital."

Drivers came to the aid of the victims of road tragedy

TWO friends whose car hit a tree were dragged from the burning vehicle by other motorists.

Philip Madden, 19, and Shane Vickers, 22, died from injuries they suffered in the impact.

An inquest held in Ruthin yesterday (Wednesday) was told of a mystery car that was seen following the pair's vehicle seconds before the crash but which fled the scene. Both grieving families and the coroner appealed for the driver of that car or anyone who may know of them to come forward. Mr Madden, of Northwood, and Mr Vickers from Cambrian View, Bettisfield, died following the crash which happened on the A495 near Bronington on October 30, 2014.

Mr Vickers grew up in Oswestry before moving to Bettisfield when he was seven. Coroner John Gittins played CCTV footage showing what he said was almost definitely Mr Madden's Corsa followed by another small car.

Mr Gittins said: "As a coroner and as a father I am utterly appalled that no one has come forward to police to give an explanation to what happened. That they do not have the courage to explain to the families what happened is beyond me."

Mr Gittins concluded both men died as a result of a road traffic collision.

He praised brave motorists who stopped and pulled the injured men out of the burning car.

The inquest heard evidence from Andrew Frost who came across the crash as he was returning home from playing for Hodnet Football Club in a match in Oswestry. Mr Frost, another driver Ralph Reynolds, and other members of the football team, got the men out of the car.

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Concert to aid farmers raises £665

A CONCERT raised more than £600 for struggling farming families.

The concert, which was held at Welshpool Livestock Centre, raised £665 for the Montgomeryshire county committee of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution.

The RABI is a welfare charity that gives out around £2m in grants each year to people from the farming world.

The Radnor Twurzels, from Rhayader, performed songs including Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree.

Also performing on the night were local YFC member Will Lister and the Welshpool High School Band, who accompanied the community singing and performed some instrumental numbers. Linda Jones, RABI's regional manager for Wales, said: "I would like to thank the committee in Montgomeryshire for arranging this lovely Christmas concert. It was a splendid evening and I hope that all the people who attended enjoyed it as much as I did. This year has been a challenging one for the farming community and I would urge anyone in financial need, who has minimal savings, to call our confidential Free-phone helpline and seek help." The helpline number is 0808 2819490.

Burns Night set to be celebrated

THE Highlands will be coming to Shropshire with a traditional Burns Night celebration at a town cricket club on January 30.

Oswestry Cricket Club will serve up a feast of food, song and, the odd spirit or two, overseen by convenors John and Marian Tidswell from 7pm.

Tickets, £25, are available from Hugh Roberts, club house manager, on 07971 963016.

Call on Claire for all your special occasions

WE MEAN BUSINESS

THE Chronicle's We Mean Business campaign celebrates Oswestry's businesses. This week we celebrate Balloons for all Occasions.

Balloons for all Occasions is based at Oswestry's Indoor Market.

Claire Fugill from the business said: "In our experience, Oswestry likes to party and even if the birthday boy or girl is aged 100, you'll find plenty at Balloons for all Occasions to help celebrate. During our 15 years of trading – much of that from Oswestry Indoor Market – we've got to know many of our customers well. Maybe it started as an 18th, and then there was the hen party followed by a wedding. It makes our day when they now come in for decorations for that first birthday and more. In recent years, business has grown. Many are becoming disenchanted with buying off the internet, and are looking once more to the high street. Online may appear cheaper, but customers are discovering you might not get the quality you want and you certainly don't get the personalised advice of someone who knows what they're talking about. Frequently recreating yourself, doing something new and different, is important. Recently we rebuilt part of our store making room for a substantial cardcraft section, serving those who enjoy card making.

"Come and find us upstairs in Oswestry Indoor Market, contact 07764 928901 or visit www.bfao.co.uk"



Claire Fugill from Balloons for all Occasions, based at Oswestry Indoor Market

NEWS IN BRIEF

Four battle it out to win election

FOUR people have put their names forward to compete for the Shropshire Council seat held by the authority's former leader Keith Barrow.

Carl Hopley for Labour, Duncan Kerr of the Green Party, Christopher Schofield of the Conservatives, and Amanda Jane Woolf of the Liberal Democrats will stand for election for the Oswestry South seat.

Gareth Proffitt, spokesman for Shropshire Council and also on behalf of the election division, said: "Any new elector wishing to register to vote in this by-election must submit an application, written or online, to the returning officer no later than January 19.

"The deadline to register for a new postal vote, change an existing postal vote or change an existing postal proxy vote is 5pm on January 20 and the deadline to register for a new proxy vote or change an existing proxy vote is 5pm on January 27."

Electors will go to the polls on February 4.

Mums have chance to meet up at cafe

NEW mums and mums-to-be are invited to join a drop-in "coffee meet" run by the National Childbirth Trust.

The first session will be held at Baby Bird Cafe in Cross Street, Oswestry, tomorrow (Friday) from 9am to 11am. All mums-to-be and new mums attending the relaunch will receive a free NCT/Baby Bird Cafe goody bag.

Coffee Meets will then be held every Friday morning on a drop-in basis between 9am and 11am.

Katie Millard, who runs Baby Bird Cafe, said: "The Coffee Meets are an ideal opportunity to meet new people, make new friends and find out more about the NCT."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Qualification joy for MMP employee

AN estate agency worker has qualified as a chartered surveyor.

Matthew Williams of Mid Wales and Shropshire estate and land agent Morris, Marshall and Poole has become a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Mr Williams works at the estate and land agent's rural department in Newtown, as well as being an auctioneer at Welshpool Livestock Sales.

"We're very pleased to congratulate Matthew for qualifying and becoming a member of the RICS," said Tony Evans, a partner at MMP. He said Mr Williams had been involved in providing advice to farmers on the extensive changes to the basic payment scheme as well being involved in a wide range of rural and agricultural work.

Businesses urged to attend meeting

BUSINESS ratepayers are being invited to a public meeting next week to learn about Powys County Council's budget plans.

Members of the local business community can go along to the meeting at County Hall, Llandrindod Wells on Tuesday.

The meeting next week starts at 6.30pm.

Cabinet member for finance, Councillor Wynne Jones, said: "The meeting will give local businesses and organisations such as chambers of commerce, chambers of trade, local representatives of the Confederation of British Industry and the Institute of Directors the opportunity to question about the council's budget plans for the coming financial years."

Figures reveal level of area's yobbish behaviour

Report by Sue Austin

VERBAL attacks, harassment, intimidation and threatening behaviour are at the root of Powys's most common complex antisocial behaviour cases, according to new figures.

Of 46 new cases being handled by a service to tackle repeat or complicated cases of anti-social behaviour and those which affect vulnerable people, 25 were in this category.

Some were resolved after letters were sent to perpetrators, and local organisations such as housing associations agreed to tackle others.

In one case a man from Powys who felt trapped in his own home was eventually rehoused. The man, whose name has not been released, was being upset by large groups of rowdy people who inflicted damage on his home, antisocial behaviour and driving and noise nuisance.

Staff at Dyfed-Powys ASB Service helped him with regular visits and discussed his concerns with a community support officer, police constable, council housing officers and others.

The outcome was the offer of a council home in a different local area which allowed him to feel a lot more safe and secure in his new home. The statistics – for July to September last year – have been released by Grwp Gwallia who provide the ASB service on behalf of police and crime commissioner Christopher Salmon.

Audience hears from Welsh poet



Myrddin ap Dafydd with librarians Saffron Price and Maureen Jones

MORE than 40 people turned out to listen to a poet talk about how the border area of Shropshire is described in historic Welsh poetry.

Myrddin ap Dafydd visited Welshpool Library where he gave a talk based on his latest book *Yn ôl I'r Dref Wen*.

The book focuses on two poems – "The Song of Llywarch Hen" and "Heledd" – which were both written around 800AD in the traditional strict measure of Welsh poetry at that time.

The first was set in the Welsh borders around Glyn Ceiriog and the latter in a mythical place called Pengwern, thought to be around the site of Shrewsbury Castle.

"These poems record the only written history of two battles where the forces of Powys were destroyed," explained Mr ap Dafydd.

Saffron Price, branch librarian at Welshpool Library, said: "It was a fascinating evening of local history and poetry in Welsh made accessible to all through the simultaneous translation of Mary Steel."

Seek good tax advice, says expert

AN accountant is urging businesses and individuals to make a New Year's resolution to save themselves money by getting better tax advice.

Rob Ellis, who lives in Llanfechain and works in Willow Street, Oswestry, believes while many people make resolutions around making more money in the New Year, many people overlook the fact they could easily be saving money with better tax planning and advice.

He said: "A lot of new clients tell me their main concern or resolution for the New Year is simply to work harder and earn more and more money."

"However, I often find when I look at everything they are doing, with a few simple changes they can save themselves a significant amount of money in tax – and it can often be done by changing very simple things which they can sometimes do for themselves."

Advice includes making sure small business accounts are reviewed regularly, using business losses to reduce tax bills, making sure wills are updated and helping children and grandchildren to save up to the maximum tax free allowance each year.

Floral art group set to meet again

LLANFYLLIN and District Floral Art Society will hold its next meeting on Monday at 7pm in the Institute, Llanfyllin.

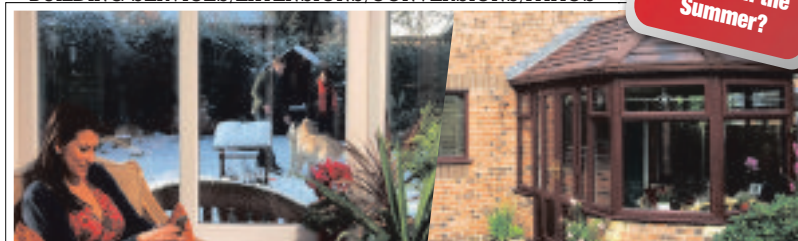
Margaret Evans will be giving a demonstration on the theme "to be inspired by all".

All are welcome.

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Invite to triathlon

ENTRIES are being invited into a triathlon which will take place in the spring along 35 miles of waterway.

The Montgomery Canal Triathlon, which is for fun and is not run as a competition, will take place on May 7, starting at Newtown.

Participants will be challenged to cycle 17 miles along the towpath from Newtown to Pool Quay, which sits just north of Welshpool.

They will then walk 11 miles from Pool Quay to Morton.

And finally the participants will be challenged to canoe seven miles from Morton to the Weston Arm at Lower Frankton, where there will be refreshments and a prize giving.

Entrants will be able to complete all

three sections or just one part of the event and there will be a small number of canoes available to hire at £10 each.

Cyclists will set off at 8.30am, walkers will head out from 10am and canoeists will paddle out from noon.

Refreshments will be available at all changeover points.

There will be marshalls and first aiders along the route.

Entry into the complete triathlon costs £25 for adults or £12.50 for anyone in full time education, or for one section it is £10 per section for adults and £5 per section for students. For more information on the event or to enter the triathlon people should contact Peter and Judith Richards on (01691) 831455 or email peter_richards@btinternet.com

The good old clays of pottery



Carol Roberts eyes up a jug from the exhibition

AN unusual display of eastern European pots has been drawing visitors to an exhibition.

But rather than being imported from the continent, the pots have been created by Oswestry's own Bulgarian Art Club, based in Willow Street in the town centre.

The items have been made in the Trojan style, which comes from the town of Troyan located at the foothills of the Balkan mountain range about 100 miles from Bulgaria's capital, Sofia. Pottery is one of the oldest crafts in Bulgaria with remnants found dating back 3,000 years.

The Trojan style began to evolve in the 19th century based on Thracian and Slavic designs. It is unique due to the red colour of clay from the region and the design. Traditionally the pottery was painted by the village women, each woman having her signature design.

They applied yellow, brown and green paint with a bulls' horns and feathers, or smeared paint with their fingertips.

The free exhibition features works by Georgi Kovachev Grishata, Penka and Jani Yanush. It is open from 10am to 4pm at Oswestry Visitor and Exhibition Centre.

Assurance on pub

VILLAGERS have been reassured that their local pub will not close when its current licensees leave at the end of the month.

Alison and Iain Foden, who currently run the Cross Guns in Pant, near Oswestry, have given notice to Marston's that they will be moving on.

In the past the pub has been closed following the departure of previous landlords and some locals have been concerned that the pub might close for a period when the couple leave.

But Marston's, which is currently offering the pub on a five-year retail agreement, has said there should be someone ready to take over at the start of next month.

A spokesman for the company said: "Earlier in the year the pub was closed while we

made a substantial investment which has greatly enhanced the interior and created extra outside space.

"We are currently in the midst of the recruitment process and we feel confident we will have a new retailer in place from February 1." The pub was recently listed as an asset of community value by Shropshire Council in recognition of its value to the local community. This followed an application by a group of regulars at the pub and other residents of Pant.

Listing as an asset of community value gives local people advance warning of any planned developments to the pub, especially any potential change of use, and gives them the option to buy the building before developers are allowed to step in.

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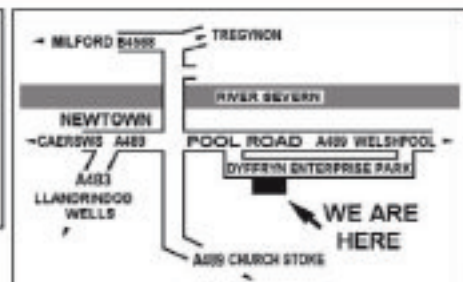
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Firm establishes annual cash drive

A COMPANY has set up a £5,000 annual charity drive where employees can decide where the money goes.

The Newmor Group, based at Henfaes Lane, Welshpool, allocates £1,000 each quarter to a local nominated cause or charity and £2,000 for Christmas – with £1,000 going to Powys Carers, £500 to Hope House and £500 to Wales Air Ambulance. A spokesman said: "It's a donation scheme where we ask the staff of Newmor Group to allocate their chosen charity which then benefits from a donation."

"The money is a donation from the company itself – James and Toby Morris, managing directors of the Newmor Group, wanted to put something back into the local community by donating £5,000 per year to make a difference to local people's lives."

Lingen Davies Cancer Relief Trust, Severn Hospice, Welshpool Community Transport, Medical Emergency Doctors, Welshpool Meals on Wheels and Welshpool League of Friends have benefited from the scheme.

Wassailing to be held at orchard

A TRADITIONAL evening of wassailing will be held at a community orchard.

The event on January 23 will start at 4.30pm at the Oswestry Station building for tea and coffee.

At 5pm the group will walk to the community orchard, 15 minutes away, for wassailing, ale, juice and sausages.

The group will return to the station at 6pm for hot food, music and dancing, with a bar available. The evening will finish at 8.30pm. Organiser Andrew Tullo said: "The first part of the evening is free, food at the station will cost £2 and the dancing will cost £4 adults and £2 children."

Railway enthusiast finds old village station sign

Report by Emma Walker

AN old sign from a railway station has been found in a garage 50 years after being taken out of use by British Rail.

Andrew Wardle was clearing out his shed when he came across three old railway signs including one from Gobowen Railway Station, near Oswestry.

The 61-year-old purchased the items when he was aged 15 from a British Rail clearance sale in either 1969 or 1970 – and they will now be put up for auction.

Mr Wardle, of Consall, near Leek in Staffordshire, said: "I'd virtually forgotten I had them."

"I was a 15-year-old railway enthusiast then and spent all my available pocket money at the sale which was held in an old goods shed behind Stoke station, the site of which is now the station's new car park."

Among the hundreds of items for sale, ranging from steam engine nameplates and number plates to signal arms and parcels trolleys, two signs in particular, Sudbury and Gobowen, caught Mr Wardle's eye and he purchased them, along with a notice-board header sign, for five shillings each.

He also filled his pockets with cap badges and buttons at a pre-decimal cost of around a shilling each.

Both Sudbury's and Gobowen's old "totem" style station signs were removed in approximately 1965/66 and replaced by a new style of sign.

Sudbury station was closed in November 1966, while Gobowen station remains open to this day.

The totem signs were known at the time as "flying sausages".



Andrew Wardle with the old Gobowen railway station sign

Prestigious accolade for businessman

AN Oswestry businessman has been given one of Europe's highest accolades in the world of management writing.

Peter Starbuck was appointed an honorary member of the Drucker Society Europe at the seventh annual Global Drucker Forum in Vienna.

Mr Starbuck, who is a visiting professor of the University of Chester, is also a founding professor at the newly-formed University Centre Shrewsbury, a visiting research fellow of The Open University and a subject matter expert for the Chartered Management Institute.

He is considered Britain's leading expert on Peter F Drucker – the man considered the ultimate management guru.

"It was amazing to be asked by Richard Straub, president of the Peter Drucker Society Europe, to go up and receive the award at the forum's opening ceremony," he said.

Mr Starbuck added: "It came completely out of the blue."

"The only previous recipient was Charles Handy, Britain's top management writer for many years, and this year Joe Maciariello and I were added to the roll of honour."

Building company backs job scheme

A BUILDER is working with a Welsh Government's anti-poverty programme to offer unemployed people living on the North Shropshire border a stepping stone to a job in the construction industry.

Anwyl Construction has made four work placements available, two of them on the site of its £5 million dementia care centre in Chirk, which is being built for Clwyd Alyn Housing Association.

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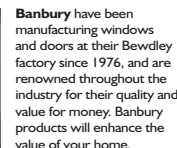
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Hall becomes very popular place to hold celebrations

A TOWN hall has seen a boom in concerts and wedding receptions – helping the venue to thrive on an independent footing.

Dances and birthday parties are also among the events held regularly at Montgomery Town Hall, according to councillors.

They say getting a full programme of paying events is key to the success strategy.

The council added the high level of interest from local groups and families was helping to ensure the town hall remained available as a community asset for years to come.

Members of Montgomery Town Council took on responsibility for the building 10 years ago from Powys County Council.

Glenys Smith, town clerk, said that the hall is in constant use by members of the community.

She said: "It is such a wonderful building – it is very popular for weddings. It looks particularly beautiful when the hanging baskets are up on the building."

"The local community has said that it wants the town hall to be retained for Montgomery and for use by Montgomery people."

"The more the hall is booked by the community the more money can be invested into its future."

Mrs Smith said the building was refurbished shortly after the town council took on a lease for the venue.

She said: "Consultants came in and suggested colours to return the building to its Georgian period. We have also had a completely new, slate floor downstairs and also a new kitchen."

Details on hiring the hall are available by visiting www.montgomery-wales.co.uk/town/council.html

Council bonfire move will bring funds boost

Report by Sue Austin

MORE good causes will benefit from a bonfire and firework night in future.

The charity group the Treble Niners has organised a bonfire night in Oswestry for the past 27 years, raising more than £70,000 for local charities.

In the past Oswestry Town Council has paid out in advance for the cost of staging the event at Brogyntyn Park and then reclaimed the money from gate receipts before the remainder is given away to local organisations. However now the councillors have decided not to reclaim those costs.

Town Clerk David Preston said that the event was put on thanks to the volunteers from the Treble Niners, a group of retired and retained firefighters and their families and friends.

"They provide all the labour and act as stewards," he said.

"The cost of fireworks has increased in the last three years because of health and safety and the need for a professional company to come in a fire the display."

"Although the display has improved the increased costs mean that a smaller profit is available each year for distribution."

He said from the council would not now be claiming back the cost of staging the event.

It means that this year about £4,500 will be handed out to charities and good causes.

A panel comprising of representatives from the Treble Niners and the council will meet to receive applications for funds and make grants.

The Treble Niners group was set up to ensure that people in Oswestry could go along to a safe, community bonfire event.

Farm shop stall is festive winner



Lynda Jones from Llyncllys Hall Farm Shop stall celebrates her Christmas win

CHRISTMAS may well have been well and truly over for some time now, but while the festive season was in full flow traders at an indoor market very much got into the spirit.

Stallholders at Oswestry's indoor market, on the Bailey Head, com-

peted with each other to create the best Christmas display on their units during the run-up to the big day.

The friendly competition was organised by the town's Chamber of Commerce and judged by the mayor, Councillor Peter Cherrington, with members of the Chamber helping

him out. The mayor said he was delighted to see so many of the market traders get involved in the festive scheme.

Together the judges chose the Llyncllys Hall Farm Shop stall as the winners, which is owned by Lynda Jones.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Library well used by the community

HUNDREDS of people have flocked to a Oswestry library for workshops, advice sessions and talks in the last year. During 2015, staff at the library led 75 free Bookstart rhyme time and story time sessions for 930 babies and toddlers, and 20 free Time to Listen sessions for 223 adults.

More than 200 people attended themed health events with library partners covering topics such as mental health awareness, cancer support, healthy heart, hearing impairment and pregnancy.

And 21 young people took on placements at the library in Arthur Street for work experience or Duke of Edinburgh schemes.

The library's computers were well used, with an average of 100 people using the machines each week for CVs and job searches. Staff from the Jobcentre led 20 work club sessions and there were 90 one-to-one IT help sessions run.

Six new volunteers have been recruited to help lead sessions next year due to the demand.

Medical centre is given warm praise

A MEDICAL centre has been rated as good following a report by the Care Quality Commission.

Inspectors graded Knockin Medical Centre good in all service areas including safety, leadership, effectiveness, how caring the service is and how responsive they are to people's needs. Professor Steve Field, chief inspector of general practice, said: "Staff understood and fulfilled their responsibilities to raise concerns and report incidents and near misses."

"All opportunities for learning from internal and external incidents were maximised."

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One of the volunteers clears items out of the nest which was home to the family of ospreys in Mid Wales



Fish has been part of the ospreys' diet

Nest is given a tidy

VOLUNTEERS have unearthed a variety of odd items after exploring a Mid Wales osprey nest at a nature reserve.

Throughout the summer visitors were transfixed by the lives of Monty and Glesni, a breeding pair of ospreys at the Dyfi Osprey Project near Machynlleth.

The pair produced three chicks, Celyn, Merin and Brenig, and the family migrated to Africa in September.

Report by Pam Kingsley

Staff at the project have taken the opportunity to visit the nest to check its structural integrity and remove any items which could be harmful to the birds.

Project member Emyr Evans said: "Monty and Glesni probably carry more than 100kg of material to the nest every year and this, especially when it's wet, puts a huge load on the nest material beneath it.

"We usually take away around two feet off

the top layer of nesting material each year." Mr Evans said the team found eight unusual things in the nest, including bones possibly belonging to a goose, thousands of fish scales, and bark, which the ospreys use to keep their beaks and talons in good condition.

They also recovered a length of baler twine, which could be fatal to an osprey if it got caught up in it, and goose feathers which the ospreys had used to line the nest, as well as one osprey feather possibly lost by Brenig after a scuffle with his sister Merin.



The activities of the osprey family over the summer proved of great interest to a lot of visitors to Mid Wales this year

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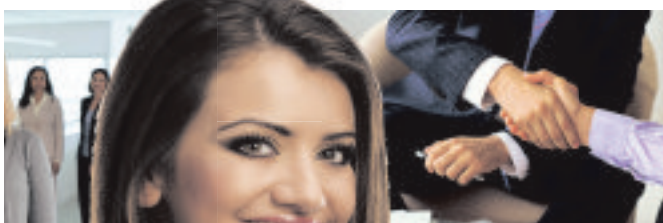


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BUSINESS Profiles

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The commercial property market in Oswestry is set for a strong year, with new developments likely to drive the local economy forward, according to legal experts in the town.

Lawyers at Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors are working with a number of property developers forging ahead with new projects right across the county, including in the Oswestry area.

As well as new property developments, renewable energy projects have been a major growth area during 2015, and Emma Wilde, commercial property and agriculture lawyer based in Lanyon Bowdler's Oswestry office, expects interest to continue to rise.

She said: "While the agricultural property sector had remained relatively buoyant during the recent economic downturn, the commercial property market had been hit hard by the recession.

"However, over the past few months we at Lanyon Bowdler have seen a definite upsurge in confidence in the market and activity across a range of sectors.

"Renewables have been big news and during 2015 we have assisted landowners with granting option agreements to developers for solar parks, turbine sites, diesel generation sites and hydro schemes."

Emma highlighted two clients who have demonstrated the renewed confidence in the commercial property industry.

She added: "We have worked closely with a number of local developers in connection with land acquisitions, option agreements and building contracts.

"The commercial lettings market is back on track and we are now acting for a number of developers entering into development agreements for new build premises and agreements for lease, as well as general commercial leases of industrial and shop units.

"We are currently acting for Pickstock Homes in the sales of its newly-built properties at their attractive development at Irvine Gardens in St Martins.

"Another client who has been very active over the past year is Saxonby Limited, a developer based in Shrewsbury which specialises in the provision of first-class developments with a particular focus on affordable housing.

"Saxonby has recently completed sites in Baschurch and Shrewsbury and has a number of ongoing projects which we are assisting with.

"These are just two examples of a resurgent property development sector in Shropshire."

For information and advice about commercial property and agriculture, contact Emma on 01691 663767 or email emma.wilde@lblaw.co.uk

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Treat yourself to some revolutionary skin care Master craftsman has global reputation

BODY and Face Options is based at Maesbury Marsh near Oswestry and among the treatments it offers is the NeoGen Spa.

The NeoGen Spa is the revolutionary system that brings you fresh, firmer, more youthful skin, improving fine lines and sun damage, including around the eyes and mouth. The treated photodamaged layers undergo a controlled thermal modification, creating new life for the skin at its foundation, replacing old damaged collagen and elastin.

The treatment is pain-free and requires no downtime.

Treating all of the skin ensures quality, consistent, long-lasting, and simultaneous improvements in fine lines, skin laxity, skin texture and photodamage. No islands of untreated skin remain. The treated skin will show continual improvement over time.

As NeoGen is not a light-based technology, treatment around the eyes is safe to perform, making NeoGen PlasmaFacial one of the few treatments possible in this area where fine lines are often prevalent.

Plasma skin resurfacing (PSR) uses the energy source of plasma to deliver heat to a targeted treatment area to achieve skin rejuvenation without affecting the surrounding tissues.

The treatment is unique in cosmetic medicine in that it does not use a more traditional energy source, such as lasers and light (IPL, LED etc.), radiofrequency or ultrasound to deliver the



Body and Face Options is based at Maesbury Marsh near Oswestry

heat required to target the desired skin cells.

Instead, it uses plasma which is an activated ionised gas converted from inert nitrogen gas. Plasma is known as the fourth state of matter, with the others being solid, liquid and gas.

Unlike light based technologies, PSR doesn't require a chromophore to attract it to the target area such as pigment, blood or water. Instead it provides a controlled, uniform,

non-fractionated energy absorption or heating across the whole skin area being targeted, without damaging the outer layers of skin. It produces high levels of energy which it is claimed provides significant tightening.

Varying settings can be utilised in order to deliver differing depths of effect, including deep dermal heating to promote collagen renewal, and superficial epidermal sloughing to reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

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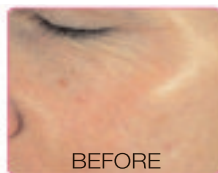
Produced by a British company who supply medical equipment to hospitals throughout the world and who have known Jane, of Body and Face Options, for several years. With this in mind, Jane has been given the honour of launching this new treatment in the UK.

"I believe by doing a course of treatments at a lower energy, you're able to tweak the body's healing powers without causing a lot of damage. I also think you achieve better results in the long run, as well as fewer side effects. My patients were extremely pleased with the results and I could immediately see the effects." **Eric Bernstein MD, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Dermatology, University of Pennsylvania, Ardmore, PA**

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ESTABLISHED in April 2002 as a not for profit leisure trust, Freedom Leisure started with four centres on behalf of the local council.

Since then the company has enjoyed considerable growth and now manages 70 leisure facilities, including the Flash Leisure Centre at Welshpool, for a number of partners as well as owning three fitness clubs.

As a not for profit trust we have no share holders to pay and surplus income is reinvested directly into the centre to provide an improved leisure service for the communities in which we operate.

We work together with our key partners including local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, schools, colleges, charities and other public, private and not-for-profit organisations. At Freedom Leisure you will find everything you need to work out, improve your fitness and enjoy the time you spend in our leisure centres.

We believe exercise should be effective and fun and our teams will make sure it is. Our membership packages are a great way to exercise regularly and save money.

One of the most important things in life is our own and our family's health.

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your needs and help you improve your health today.

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Well, we're not going to be able to turn you into sporting superstar overnight but Freedom Leisure has everything you need to get you active,

fit and motivated and with our great New Year offer we'll be able to keep you going!

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Our sale doesn't stop with the stoves. Gas and electric fires and stoves are also available with an extra 10 per cent off the retail price. Even the fireplaces are on sale!

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Chamber ready to help as economy expands

AS 2016 gets up and running, your Chamber is perfectly placed to support the wider Shropshire business community as it expands the county's economic growth, and with it employment opportunities.

2015 saw us reach record levels of member companies, unprecedented levels of event attendees, and the widest selection of member benefits we have ever offered.

Diverse

As part of our benefit portfolio our focus is on developing innovative and diverse events that provide a catalyst for finding new contacts and new opportunities for businesses.

Our commitment to supporting the skills agenda remains a priority as we play our part in bringing business and young people together, ensuring that future careers decisions are made with a clear knowledge of business need both short and long term.



By **RICHARD SHEEHAN**,
chief executive of
Shropshire Chamber of
Commerce

We will continue to deliver the Your Future Events across Shropshire well into 2016 and I urge all businesses to get involved.

Our Policy work often goes under the radar, and so it is our intention though 2016 to raise the profile of the work that is done both locally and nationally in partnership with The British Chambers Of Commerce our accrediting body.

With record levels of Shropshire businesses responding to our Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) we are making sure the

voice of Shropshire Business is being heard in the Westminster corridors of power.

International Trade is a vital ingredient in successful economic growth and our team of five advisors have worked tirelessly in support of our Shropshire exporters through 2015 with over £40 million worth of additional business being won thanks to their interventions and support. 2015 saw us bring in commercial officers from countries around the world.

Overseas

Fifteen different countries have met hundreds of Shropshire businesses, raising awareness of overseas opportunities and the support available to enter those markets. Our goal for 2016 is to expand on that amazing position and grow our economic impact by at least a further 25 per cent.

During 2016, many of our businesses will face the challenge of the introduction of the national living wage and the Work Based Pension auto enrolment, and for many this will have a significant impact.

As a chamber, we are proud to be able to support you with our auto enrolment member benefit and continue to lobby on behalf of business regarding the cost

implications. As shareholders in the West Midlands Chambers of Commerce LLP we are working tirelessly to best position Shropshire to capitalise on any opportunities that may be available as the Midlands Engine gathers momentum.

Whilst no one can be clear on the timescale or impact of change, and on what the shape of business support will look like, be assured we are committed to playing our part.

We have many highlights through the working year, but none to rival our Shropshire Business Awards which is now entering its 16th year of providing an unrivalled platform for the celebration of Shropshire business success.

June 24 promises to once again illustrate all that is fantastic about Shropshire as a place to do business. Whilst many of the traditional awards will be once again there for businesses to enter, at the time of writing we are consulting on a number of exciting new awards to be introduced in 2016.

As in every year, business as a whole will face challenges and opportunities throughout 2016, but Shropshire Chamber of Commerce is a team of 16 people committed to supporting whom ever, however they can.

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Michael J Lowe C.B.E., D.L., Honorary Patron of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce & Enterprise Ltd.

For Patronage enquiries please contact Gail Jennings, Executive Assistant, Shropshire Chamber of Commerce. Call 01952 208200 or email gjennings@shropshire-chamber.co.uk

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As a Chamber Member "we're well connected."

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If it's new contacts you're after,
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Whatever your business does, our expertise and support services can help you. As Shropshire's only accredited Chamber, we have a proven ability to help our members flourish, so it's not surprising that more local businesses turn to us than any other Chamber.

We are passionate about businesses in Shropshire, giving you a voice on the national stage and ensuring your needs are met.

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Service

Roger Hotchkiss Car Sales has been at the site for more than 30 years and has built up a great reputation for service and customer care.

The stock at Roger Hotchkiss Car Sales holds up to 120 cars, with an average of 70 models available at any time, ensuring choice whilst maintaining a standard of quality.

On top of sales, they are always looking to purchase used cars if you're interested in selling. The majority of their cars have an excellent service history, with manufacturer warranty available on some models.

With their base in Preston Gub-



Roger Hotchkiss Car Sales focuses on offering a range of brands at very competitive prices

bals, Roger Hotchkiss Car Sales cover the wider Shropshire area, regularly serving customers in Shrewsbury and Telford. To get a better idea of what Roger Hotchkiss Car Sales has in stock or if you're looking to enquire, have a look at their website or alternatively, call 01939 290351.

A ONE-STOP shop for all your public information and warning signs, Xtreme Signs & Print is a local business based at Warehouse Units, Granary House, Ebnal near Oswestry.

From the smallest sticker to the biggest haulage trailer, Xtreme Signs & Print offers a comprehensive service to meet all your needs.

From road signs, directional signs, shop front signage and health and safety signage to vinyl banners and vehicle livery, the firm offers quality work at realistic prices.

The firm's talented staff have more than 30 years of experience, all areas are covered and the company uses high quality production and materials while offering guaranteed low prices.

Signs

They are specialists in temporary road signs and site signs while vehicle livery printing and fitting is undertaken in the firm's purpose-built print room.

Shop fronts and signage is produced by the firm and there is a fitting service available.

Xtreme Signs & Print has a fantastic, easy-to-use website at www.xtremesignsuk.com and there are many, many more services available.



Xtreme Signs & Print can carry out vehicle livery work

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The team at K C Jones prides itself in its high standard of customer service

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Growing construction firm proud to be local

PAUL Huxley Construction, a leading manufacturer of steel-framed buildings, is one of the most recent companies to move on to Rednal Industrial Estate.

Director Paul Huxley wanted his business to be located both close to his home and also centrally within England and Wales.

The company has expanded rapidly, and continues to grow due to the demand for high quality steel framed buildings throughout the UK.

Paul, who has been in the steel-framed building industry for 25 years, has seen his own business grow quickly in just one year.

He said: "It is quite daunting starting your own company but I was convinced it would be a success with my experience and knowledge."

"In the first year, turnover has increased 250 per cent and we're now one of the biggest companies at Rednal."

Staff numbers at Paul Huxley Construction have also grown.

Paul said: "I started with two office staff and two welders in the workshop. I now have four office staff, 10 in the workshop and yard, a southern-based sales person and three erecting teams travelling the country. In addition, I've developed close links with other companies, many locally, to offer our complete design, manufacture and build package."

Paul says he spotted a gap in the market for the supply of quality yet affordable steel-framed buildings for



Paul Huxley Construction sources all its material from suppliers based in the UK

agricultural, industrial and equestrian use.

Proud to be a British manufacturer, with all materials sourced from UK suppliers and locally where possible, the company has manufactured more than 150 buildings in its first year of trade. They make both kit and customised steel framed buildings in a wide range of sizes and for many uses.

Paul said: "I want to build a good reputation and to encourage repeat

customers so I keep a very close eye on manufacturing and staff."

"So far, it's been great as we have been frequently praised for our high quality products, prices and also for customer care and professionalism."

Paul is looking forward to the future. He said: "I want to build on our solid start and to become an even bigger employer of local people. I am confident I have chosen the right place to base my business."

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THERE is never a quiet moment for Michael Kinsey, having recently opened Quarry Furnishings, the sister company to The Clearance Depot. Quarry Furnishings is now getting ready to present a range of new stock throughout 2016, showcasing a host of relaxed and lived-in feel furniture.

An Aladdin's cave of goodies awaits customers visiting Quarry Furnishings in Welshpool.

The furniture is sourced directly from the manufacturer with style and quality of the furniture being obviously of key importance.

Fantastic

Quarry Furnishings also have fantastic cash deals on their three-piece suites, corner suites, table and chairs, wardrobes, mattresses and so much more.

Michael has been in this line of business for more than 50 years and knows the industry inside and out.

The team always offers an exceptional service with full satisfaction and quality guaranteed.

At Quarry Furnishings there is always an immediate delivery service available on all showroom items if required.

Michael is firm that he cannot be beaten when it comes to price.



An Aladdin's Cave of a whole host of goodies awaits customers visiting Quarry Furnishings in Welshpool which offers fantastic cash deals and exceptional service

Quarry Furnishings is open six days per week, Monday through to Saturday. Check out the new furniture discount store at Unit

4 Brook Street, Welshpool, SY21 7NA, just behind The Simply Garage. Call Michael on 07494 680413 for more details.

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A privately owned family run company A C Roof Trusses Limited has operated from their site in Welshpool, Powys, for over 34 years.

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We pride ourselves on supplying quality items designed and manufactured to meet your individual needs.

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The company is continually expanding and over the last 15 years have been producing Timber Frame to complement both our Roof Truss and Floor Joist manufacture.

Our design team have a combined 60 years experience in the design of roof trusses, engineered floor and/or timber frame. With experience in on-site construction together with software development skills these assets assist us in finding practical solutions



A C Roof Trusses Limited offers a complete one-stop service

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Michael has more than 30 years experience of working in the Shropshire and Mid-Wales property market and specialises in the provision of independent residential surveys for private clients.

DPA Surveys offer three types of surveys, including an RICS Condition Report.

This shows the condition of the property, offers guidance to legal advisors and highlights any urgent defects.

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The RICS Condition Report does not include a valuation or a rebuilding cost appraisal.



The RICS Homebuyer Report is the second type of survey offered by DPA Surveys and that includes all the features of the RICS Condition Report, plus a market valuation and a rebuilding cost appraisal.

It also includes advice on defects that may affect the value of the property with repairs, and ongoing maintenance advice. DPA Surveys also offer the RICS Building Survey which is essential for larger or older properties,

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Indifferent reaction as village trees are felled



The trees were prominent in this postcard, which probably dates from Edwardian times



All down – the scene at the start of September 1966

ON an ordinary day in the mid-1960s, the village of Six Ashes near Bridgnorth became No Ashes.

The six ash trees which had been such a feature, at the heart of the village for so long, were chopped down, and the fallen trunks were left lying forlorn close to the Six Ashes pub.

It happened without any protest or fuss, and was done by Salop County Council workmen.

It was probably was carried out around the end of August, 1966 – our picture of the aftermath was carried in the Bridgnorth Journal of Friday, September 2, that year.

Remember

The reason? It was to widen the road amid concerns about the traffic in the village. Locals in the pub couldn't remember there ever being an accident near the trees.

As for the trees themselves, did the hamlet take its name from them? They had been a feature for generations and after being felled one local counted the rings on one of the trunks and concluded it was 114 years old.

It seems there had been no folklore or anecdotes connected with the trees, which may explain the relative lack of any protests, which is not to say the villagers were happy.

"A bit of country life has been spoilt," said Bill Haynes, aged 78, and said to be the oldest resident in the village.

Concerned

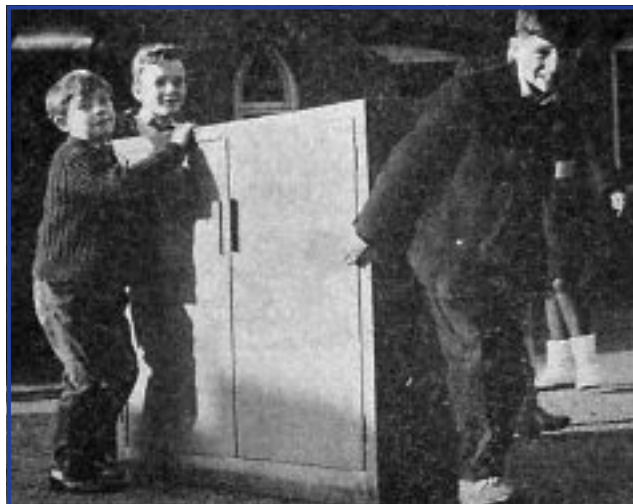
And Sir Edward Thompson, of Gatacre Park, said: "I did not want to see the landscape spoilt. I tried to save the trees, but I was also concerned about the village."

"The road will certainly become more dangerous, though now there will be a footpath."

Because of his concern, Sir Edward had offered the council land for a diversion round the village free of charge. But the widening went ahead instead.

As it happens, while Six Ashes had lost its trees, just down the road is Four Ashes.

Has that still got its trees – and if it hasn't, when did they disappear?



We're out of here! Pupils help to move furniture at St Mary's School



A stone above a window pinpointed the building date to 1847

School abandoned



The end of the story came with demolition in June 1970



The headmaster's book store was in the roof of the building



All gone ... The deserted school after the emergency evacuation

FIFTY years ago the parents of children attending St Mary's Blue-coat CofE School in Bridgnorth were worried – and with good reason.

Because, according to an architect's report, the state of the Victorian buildings were so terrible that even heavy snowfall could bring them crashing down.

The conditions in the school in Hospital Street had caused it to be described as a "slum". Staff had got up a petition calling it "a death trap", and 551 parents had signed a petition demanding measures to rehouse the children.

The head, Mr Douglas Lawrence, said that if it were not for "a display of loyalty" by himself, he would not send his own boy there.

And he added that he would not blame any parent who kept a child away from school.

The tipping point came in December 1965 with that architect's report that said that the school could collapse, either partially or

MEMORY LANE

By Toby Neal

totally, under stresses of weather, or even if a lorry crashed in to it.

That report sparked an immediate late-night meeting between Mr Lawrence and the chairman of the managers, the Rev George Abell.

They decided that there was no alternative but to evacuate the children at once, and Mr Lawrence was up until 3am making plans for the move.

Safety

"The architects commissioned by the managers to inspect the school told us there was only a 50-50 chance of safety if the children remained at the school, even until the end of term," said Mr Abell.

"He said that the school might collapse, either partially or totally, under the stresses brought about by adverse weather or a heavy snowfall."

"The building could even collapse, the architect told us, if a lorry skidded into the

wall. It was clearly a risk we could not afford to take."

The emergency evacuation took place on Tuesday, December 7, 1965. That afternoon parties of schoolboys helped staff to remove chairs, books and other essential equipment from the school over to emergency classrooms.

The children were strictly forbidden to set foot inside the buildings. Instead, the masters piled up chairs and carried them outside the precincts of the school to where the children were waiting.

Heavy stuff would have to wait for a furniture remover to be called in.

The 160 children were quickly back in class, but in entirely new surroundings at a local parish hall and in new school buildings on the nearby Grove estate.

As the blame game started to rumble, some fingers were pointed at the press, presumably for blowing matters up out of all proportion.

But Mr Lawrence was having none of that: "Had it not been for your stand we should still have been housed in the school," he said.

"In 30 years of teaching, 15 of those as

a head, and in three schools, I have never seen staff and children working under such appalling conditions."

He went on to say that nothing would have happened had it not been for the support of a parents' petition, the local press, and the architect's report.

For St Mary's, the evacuation spelt its doom.

The building dated back to 1847 when it was erected as a memorial to Thomas Whitmore of Apley.

Unless any reader tells us differently, we shall assume that December 7, 1965, was the day it closed forever.

Demolition

A few years later the friendly bulldozers moved onto the site. Demolition work on the premises in Low Town took place in June 1970.

But the troubles were not over for the site, as even as the work was under way there was a controversy over what it should be used for.

Councils wanted the land for a car park, while business people wanted the land for a supermarket.

Do you have any old pictures or tales from the past to share with our readers? Email toby.neal@shropshirestar.co.uk

Homes & Gardens

A four-page supplement packed with top tips and the latest looks

27
Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, January 14, 2016



New kitchen is popular way to add value to home

KITCHENS are the centre of our homes, but although they're the area we choose to spend the most time, either eating or socialising, it seems all too few of us have our 'dream' space.

Around 65 per cent of Brits feel their current kitchen is far from ideal – with its inadequacies most exposed during the pressure-cooker stress of Christmas – and around a quarter struggle with a cramped or awkward shaped room, according to recent research by Wickes.

Aside from the benefits of enjoying this space more – and potentially being able to cook up a storm – it could be worth reconsidering a refit on financial grounds alone, as it's the most popular way to add value to a property, estimated by experts at around 15 per cent.

Shades of grey or cool blue will give a kitchen an ultra-modern look.

Natural materials rule in decor, and showcasing rich wood grain and stunning stone worktops – marble through to slate – brings personality and ultimate luxury to a room.

Mixing modern and old-style materials,

and using accents of black and charcoal to add definition, achieves a chic look.

Neptune's Chichester kitchen, from £8,000, pictured, is a simple design which blends classic lines with traditional details and crisp silhouettes, and can be painted in any colour of choice.



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Waking up to a better morning routine...

MANY of us find getting out of bed tougher during winter. Abi Jackson rounds up seven simple solutions for taking the edge off those gloomy starts:

When sun's streaming in through the window, birds merrily tweeting in the trees, leaping out of bed in the morning is easy. But come winter, when it's dark, gloomy – and probably blowing a gale and drizzly too – it's little wonder many of us find getting up more difficult.

In fact, more than half of us (59 per cent) admit getting up during winter is a 'struggle', according to research by Twinings English Breakfast tea, with Monday mornings the hardest (well, obviously!).

On average, we hit the snooze button once, giving ourselves an extra 9.36 minutes in bed (however, 2 per cent confess to snoozing for more than 45 minutes each day!), and 18-24-year-olds grapple most with mornings, with 51 per cent struggling to get up, compared to 17 per cent of over-55s. Women also fare slightly worse than men, blaming the cold weather and darkness for making getting up a chore.



We might not be a nation of winter morning people, but it seems, on the whole, we're a resourceful bunch too, with many agreeing they use 'morning motivation' tools to help make the transition from bed to up a little easier. Perhaps unsurprisingly for us Brits, a 'nice hot cup of tea' was the most popular tactic for starting the day, while at the other end of the scale, a mere 7 per cent enticed themselves out of bed with a workout session.

"The way you start your day can make a big difference to the way you feel all day," says psychotherapist Robert Stewart, who analysed the Twinings research. "So ensure you start it right, make sure you add a touch of adventure to your normal routine. Even things which may seem like an insignificant change can make a big difference."

So what little changes could you make?

1. Sort out your sleep

If you want getting up to feel easier, a good night's sleep is essential. Many of us are guilty of not prioritising good sleep, or keeping up bad habits that we know aren't helping – like using our smartphones/iPads before bed. If you struggle to get up because you're not getting enough sleep, are there things you can do to address that?

2. Breakfast like a king

"Where we have less exposure to the sun, we lack vitamin D and this affects the production of serotonin, one of our happy hormones. A good breakfast, rich in protein, carbohydrates and vitamins, will give your body and

brain a good boost," says Stewart.

3. Start with a mindful activity

Mindfulness meditation is growing in popularity all the time, helping us manage stress, depression, anxiety and find greater focus. If you don't fancy sitting still to meditate, find other ways to connect with the moment and start the day with a sense of clarity and calm.

Light up

Winter's lack of daylight affects most of us to some degree, but for some people, the extra darkness is a real problem. If this is you, could investing in an illuminating alarm clock – which gradually lights up the room, mimicking a summer's morning – help?

5. All in the prep

If mornings are usually a lot of flap and chaos, how about spending a few minutes the night before getting organised: get your outfit ready, pack your bag?

6. Make showering a joy

Yes, washing fulfils a function. But they say happiness is all about the little things, and your morning shower is an easy way to turn an everyday task into a real pleasure. Why not invest in a shower gel you love, with a scent that perks up the senses and leaves your skin feeling gorgeous?

7. Transform your commute

Dread your commute? There's no magic wand that's going to transform those things, but we can transform our attitudes, and how we use this time. If you commute by train, it's the perfect time to lose yourself in a good book. Drive or walk – how about listening to music or a podcast? Retrain your brain to see this part of the day as a meaningful and rewarding window.

Keep the temperatures up and bring costs down



Keeping your home warm and cosy during the winter months does not have to cost a fortune

By Gabrielle Fagan

KEEP the heat in and the cold out this winter with a few simple measures that won't break the bank.

Follows these five tips for a warmer home:

1. A quarter of the heat in an uninsulated house is lost through the roof, according to the Energy Saving Trust, so insulating the loft is a great way to retain heat and save money.

Even if your loft has insulation, it may not be thick enough – the recommended depth for mineral wool is 27cm, but other types of insulation may be different. You should lay the insulation between the joists and then across them at a 90-degree angle to create two layers, although rigid insulation boards are useful if you want to board over the loft for storage.

2. Open chimney breasts can be very draughty, so if you have an unused fireplace, get the chimney capped on the roof (by a roofer) and fit a chimney balloon from below.

This inflates inside the chimney to keep warm air in the room and block cold air coming down the chimney, but of course, the fireplace can't be used with it in place.

3. Letting in sunlight during the day makes rooms warmer, especially if they're south facing. The best way to retain that heat is to close the curtains or blinds when it starts to get dark. If you're at work at that time, this isn't possible, but clever technology can do it for you.

For example, the Ultra range of powered blinds from Appeal Home Shading (www.appealshading.com) can be programmed according to the time, temperature or light. If you want the blinds to close at dusk or when the temperature falls below a certain level, you can set them to, so the room stays warmer than it otherwise would – now that's technology at its best.



Letting sunlight into your home during daylight hours will create warmth

4. If you prefer curtains, make sure they're thermal ones or have a thick lining – this is one of the best ways to minimise heat loss through windows and patio doors.

For extra insulation at this time of year, fit a curtain pole above your home's front and back doors and hang a thick curtain across it, especially if the doors are partially or fully glazed.

5. To keep your home's boiler working efficiently, make sure it's serviced annually. Research by boiler manufacturer Worcester, Bosch Group (see www.worcester-bosch.co.uk for installers), found that less than half of the homeowners questioned had remembered to do this, while one in five had never had their boiler serviced.

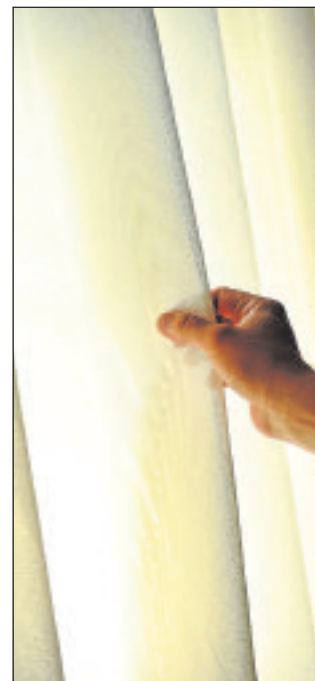
"Even new boilers need to be checked each year," says Worcester's Martyn Bridges. "This is even more important the

older the boiler gets. A boiler is one of the most relied on appliances in the home, but is largely forgotten about until it actually stops working."

A boiler service, which should include checking the effectiveness of the flue and that the boiler is safe, among other things, must be carried out by a Gas Safe Register engineer (www.gassaferegister.co.uk), or OFTEC registered (www.oftec.org.uk/consumers/consumers) for oil-fired boilers.

PRODUCT OF THE WEEK

Really Useful Boxes from Wickes can be stacked, which makes them ideal if you have limited space. Smaller items can be packed into the 35ltr one (£11.99, Wickes), which is compact but still has lots of space, while the 145ltr one (£34.99, Wickes) is enormous



Keep curtains and blinds closed when it gets dark to help keep the heat in



Get your boiler serviced regularly



Really Useful Boxes from Wickes

and offers all sorts of storage possibilities – there's a medium-sized one, too, which is 84ltr and costs £20. These white see-through boxes are really sturdy and have lids that lock in place with the handles to keep everything neat and tidy.

HOW-TO TIP

How can you solve the problem of draughty windows? An easy DIY solution is window film, such as Wickes Seasonal Secondary Glazing Film (£6.89, or three for the price of two, Wickes). Clear film like this can be fixed in place with tape and is often finished with the heat from a hairdryer to create a draughtproof seal. Window film isn't a permanent solution, but it is a fraction of the price of secondary or double glazing and can be fitted in just a few hours.

Village homes look set to sell fast

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, January 14, 2016



Primesave Properties are building high quality homes in Little Minsterley, St Martins, Great Ness and Morda

Advertisement feature
SHROPSHIRE developers Primesave Properties have started work on their latest development – Linden Fields at Little Minsterley.

A popular Shrewsbury-based developer, the firm is known for building high quality homes. Featuring a mixture of two, three and

four bed homes, the new development will provide much in demand new homes for first time buyers and families, with reservations already being made for the homes.

Along with Little Minsterley, Primesave will also complete current developments in St Martins, Great Ness and Shrewsbury before starting their site in Morda, Oswestry in the spring, of two, three and four bedroom starter

and family homes. Previous developments have all sold off plan. With a high level of interest in the new Minsterley development, it is expected that the new properties will also sell off plan, allowing buyers to customise their homes from the beginning. This includes the interiors – kitchens, fixtures, fittings and more – to suit their lifestyle and create their dream home.

Selling off plan allows buyers to choose kitchens, fixtures, fittings and more right from the start

Primesave Properties work with all home buyers from the initial interest through to the new owners receiving the keys to their new home, ensuring every care is taken to create a stress free process, and allowing them to enjoy their new home – something that Primesave Properties prides itself on.

Keri Negrón-Jennings, director of Primesave Properties, said

“We always work hard to ensure our homes are built to the best possible standard and we’re always keen to listen to buyers to tailor the specification to suit each individual – matching their tastes and lifestyles.”

If you would like further information on any of Primesave Properties developments, please call 01743 241135 or visit Primesave website www.primesave.co.uk

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High gloss white and black kitchen from Hub Kitchens



The Horizon kitchen, in anthracite, from £4,899, available from Betta Living



The Vision stand alone compact kitchen, from £3,000

Top taste kitchens

Advertisement Feature

“IT’S easy to feel overwhelmed when trying to choose a kitchen,” says Daniele Brutto of Hub Kitchens, specialists in Italian-inspired design.

“There are so many materials, colours and finishes in the market at the moment, but what’s important is focusing on what will work for you and your space.

“Pick something you like, which could be a particular wall colour, a floor tile or work surface texture and work outwards from there. Keeping one element at the heart of your design will make the whole process much more straightforward.”

Take comfort from the fact that size isn’t everything, according to Brutto, who says small spaces can still look stylish if a scheme is kept simple and every inch of space is exploited.

“Custom-made cabinets can conceal day-to-day appliances when they’re not in use, while it’s also possible to maximise preparation areas by using worktops which cover sinks or extend.

“It’s all about marrying imagination with innovative design and creating a calm, relaxed environment, where it’s a pleasure to work and play.”

Shades of grey or cool blue will give a kitchen an ultra-modern look and can be enlivened with either a colourful splashback, or add a warming glow with copper metallic accessories.

“The general trend still continues for the kitchen to literally be the heart of the home, and grey is still a massive colour trend, whether it’s used for unit fronts or even grey grouting in between tiles,” says Wickes design consultant, Simon Burton.



The Canterbury solid oak, hand painted kitchen available from Davonport



The Padstow wine rack available from Marks & Spencer



The Chichester kitchen, from £8,000, available from Neptune



The TM Italia kitchen, available from Hub Kitchens



The Suffolk kitchen, in navy, available from Neptune

Property

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING



Benefits of using an NAEA member

The National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) is the UK's leading professional body for estate agency personnel, being part of a group representing 16,000 members who practice across all aspects of property services both in the UK. These include residential and commercial sales and lettings, property management, business transfer, auctioneering and land. NAEA is dedicated to the goal of professionalism within all aspects of property, estate agency and land. Its aim is to reassure the general public that by appointing an NAEA member to represent them they will receive the highest level of integrity and service for all property matters. The NAEA is a sister organisation to the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA). What makes NAEA members different? They are united in their drive to uphold professional standards within the industry and deliver an unrivalled service to their clients. With over 7,000 members, NAEA is the largest professional body of estate agents, which brings with it a responsibility of leading the way in making the industry safer and fairer for everyone. By using a NAEA agent you are guaranteed: That the agency has professional indemnity insurance To be consulting with an agent who is either experienced or qualified who can give you up-to-date advice and guidance That you are dealing with an agent who voluntarily follows the conduct and membership rules laid out by NFOPP (National Federation of Property Professionals) regulation That you have a route to independent redress.

Preparing for a sale in winter

During the winter, the housing market is renowned for being slower, with many people holding off on selling their property until the spring. However, by incorporating a few simple tips, sellers can make their properties look and feel more attractive, increasing the chance of receiving an offer during the winter, says the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) Martyn Baum, president of National Association of Estate Agents, says: "Traditionally, properties are harder to sell during the winter. "It's dark and cold and while homes don't look as attractive, we're less inclined to be proactive and search for a property – and this can leave sellers feeling in a stalemate position, waiting for the spring to kick in. "Your estate agent should be well equipped to adapt to selling homes in these quieter periods but you can start by making changes as small as turning on a light or clearing out clutter." The NAEA's top tips for those looking to sell their property during winter are as follows: First impressions count: The first seconds upon arriving at a property really impact the buyer's decisions, so clear your front entrance of any winter weather damage. Winter can make the front garden and paths look dull and dirty, so ensuring these are clean and clear of leaves will improve the attractiveness of the property. Bright and beautiful: Ensure your home is well lit, this means simply checking all the bulbs are working prior to a viewing and switching them on, including any



outdoor lighting. You'll know which lighting looks best in your home so work with this, especially when viewings run into the evening. During the day you can make the most of natural light by ensuring all blinds and curtains are fully open and clutter is moved out of the way. Warm and friendly: It's important to make your house feel warm and homely; it will encourage potential buyers to stay longer and to be able to vision themselves living at home. Smell is also important and each home smells

different, so in order to not risk putting buyers off, freshen up your home. Open the windows prior to the viewing to let some fresh air circulate – unless it's freezing – and display some freshly cut flowers... the old cliché of fresh bread or roasting coffee really does work as well. It is also advisable to accentuate any features that are particularly important in the winter such as a fireplace, which can be a real selling point of a home. In the Garden: A messy garden can signal the need for too much work and thus detract buyers; the winter weather can also tire garden furniture, which

looks quite unsightly. If possible, clear patio furniture away, if not, ensure they are securely covered. It is also advisable to trim back overhanging branches, particularly those blocking the windows in order to encourage as much light into the property as possible. Be flexible: With less daylight hours available for potential buyers to view your house, you should be as available as possible, for prospective buyers to view it when it's convenient for them. Your estate agent should help you work around these tricky daylight hours. Tackle any winter damage: Make sure any problems with the property that are more prominent in the winter – such as damp or a faulty boiler – are fixed prior to putting the house on the market. Increased rainfall over the winter does take its toll on guttering, so check the gutters and drain covers are properly cleared of dead leaves and other debris, as leaky gutters and down pipes cause damage and are unsightly. Flying off for the winter: If you are going away for any period over the winter, the heating should be left on at a low temperature (minimum of 15°C), in order to prevent the pipes from freezing. If you are away for a long period and don't want to keep the heating on 24/7, make sure it is on a timer. Longer spells at a lower temperature can be more economical than shorter blasts at higher temperatures. This will ensure that there are no problems upon your return to be dealt with before showing to prospective buyers.



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4 BEDROOM HOUSE

Churchfields, St Martins



OC5607

This detached family home offers spacious accommodation and is situated within a popular residential area in a sought after village. The property is close to the open countryside and close to commuter links, making the property ideally located for those who commute. Reception Hall, Lounge Dining Room, Kitchen, Cloakroom/Utility, Study, Master Bedroom with Ensuite, Three Further Bedrooms, Bathroom, Garage, Gardens and Parking.

Price: £200,000

T: 01691 670 320

CHAIN FREE BARN CONVERSION

Plas Offa, Pentre



OC5613

This delightful two bedroom barn conversion approximately 240 years old boasts an abundance of character including beamed ceilings and feature stone walls and has beautiful rural views of the countryside to the rear. The property consists of an open plan lounge dining kitchen, two bedrooms with character ceiling beams, Bathroom with over bath shower. Front garden and rear garden and parking for two vehicles. All major road and rail networks are easily accessible.

Price: £149,950

T: 01691 670 320

DETACHED HOUSE

Tynings, Morda Close, Oswestry



OC5605

This handsome detached family home is situated in a most prestigious residential area a short walk from Oswestry Town. Retaining many of its 1955 features which complement the immaculate interiors this property must be viewed to be appreciated. Elegant Reception Hall, Sitting Room, Formal Lounge, Kitchen Dining Room, Utility Room, Inner Hallway, Cloakroom, Study/Playroom, Conservatory, Four First Floor Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gardens, Parking.

Price: £410,000

T: 01691 670 320

HOUSE & COTTAGE

Rectory Coach House, West Felton



OC5005

This four-bedroom converted Coach House faces south east and is set around an attractive cobbled courtyard, together with a self-contained, detached two-bedroom stone cottage, recently built triple garage and front and rear gardens. The property, which is full of character, is situated in a quiet and mature area on the edge of the village of West Felton, with open countryside walks on the doorstep. EPC F.

Price: £645,000

T: 01691 670 320

COTTAGE & LAND

Pen Y Parc, Moelfre



OC3977

This delightful character cottage is situated in a most enchanting rural position, secluded but not isolated. Offering three bedrooms, three reception rooms and a potential annexe (subject to planning consent). The grounds extend to 4.5 acres and offer excellent equestrian features, accompanied with the well established cottage gardens, this property with undoubtedly be of interest to keen gardeners and those with equestrian interests. EPC Rating F.

Price: £415,000

T: 01691 670 320

NO CHAIN LOVELY HOUSE

Greystone Court, Oswestry



OC5053

This handsome property is charming and elegant, situated in a most convenient location within walking distance to Oswestry Town. This property offers a slice of grandeur with its own walled courtyard and elegant reception rooms. The accommodation comprises; Elegant Reception Hall, Drawing Room, Sitting Room, Kitchen Dining Room, Utility Room, Cloakroom, Cellar, Four Bedrooms, Bathroom, Courtyard Garden, Gardens, Garage, Parking.

Price: £279,950

T: 01691 670 320

BUILDING PLOT

Residential Land, Croeswylan Lane, Oswestry



OC5099

The property provides a detached building plot of approximately 0.1 hectares (0.25 acres) benefiting from a Full planning consent for a single open market 4 bed roomed house with an integrated garage under planning reference Number 13/02031/ FUL.

Price: £150,000

T: 01691 670 320

NO CHAIN 2 BEDROOMS

Rose Cottages, Llansantffraid



OC5003

This Grade II Listed property boasts a wealth of character and charm throughout. Having recently undergone an extensive scheme of renovation and updating which has enhanced the appeal of this delightful home. The accommodation comprises: Sitting Room, Dining Area, Kitchen, Landing, Bedroom One, Bedroom Two, Bathroom, Workshop One with WC, Garden Store, Aveyr/ Garden Store, Generous Size Garden with Pond.

Price: £125,000

T: 01691 670 320

HOUSE WITH LAND

Providence Barn, Maesbrook



OC5080

A wonderful detached barn conversion overlooking its own 2.5 acres of mature gardens and paddocks. Situated in a tucked away location with easy commuting links to Oswestry, Welshpool and Shrewsbury. Offering a spacious house and a self contained annexe. Ideally would suit equestrian or garden enthusiasts and must be viewed to be appreciated.

Price: £525,000

T: 01691 670 320

LUXURY HOME

Benvenuti, Morton



OC5089

Standing in landscaped grounds of approximately 1.5 acres and offering magnificently proportioned accommodation, this substantial home extends to some 6600 sq.ft and offers versatility and luxury to the highest of standards. Elegant Hall, Generous Reception Rooms, High Specification Kitchen, Utility, Shower Room, Office, Master Suite with Dressing Room, Guest Suite, Three further Bedrooms, Sauna, Bathroom, Gardens, Summer Houses, Triple Garage.

Price: £995,000

T: 01691 670 320

NO CHAIN SPACIOUS DETACHED

Glebe House, Selattyn



OC5073

Standing within its extensive garden this detached former Rectory offers adaptable and spacious accommodation with superb conservatory. Positioned well for village life on the edge of a most sought after Welsh Borderland village. Reception Hall, WC, Office, Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility/Boot Room, Large Conservatory, Lounge, Master Bedroom with Ensuite, Three Further Bedrooms, Bathroom, Workshop, Garage, Garden Stores, Ample Parking.

Price: £389,950

T: 01691 670 320

NO CHAIN SUPERB DETACHED

The Hall, Llanfyllin



OC5037

Believed to date from the 15th Century with later additions, The Hall is a particularly handsome residence offering versatile and well proportioned accommodation yet retaining many original features. Grade II Listed and reputedly visited by King Charles I in 1645, The Hall now provides an eight bedroom delightful family residence with great potential to satisfy a variety of requirements and set in delightful generously proportioned landscaped gardens with former barn currently used as a studio.

Price: £430,000

T: 01691 670 320

NO CHAIN SEMI DETACHED BUN-

Vyrnwy Road, Oswestry



OC5606

This two bedroom semi detached bungalow is situated in a most convenient location within walking distance to Oswestry Town. The property is warmed by gas fired central heating and benefits from double glazing (where stated). Reception Hall with Cloaks Cupboard, Kitchen, Lounge/Dining Room, Inner Hallway, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Parking, Gardens to Front and Rear.

Price: £124,950

T: 01691 670 320

2 BEDROOM DETACHED

Hampton Fields, Oswestry



OC5036

A wonderful opportunity to purchase an immaculate detached bungalow with South facing garden. The property is conveniently positioned within walking distance to Oswestry Town Centre. Recently re-fitted with a new combination boiler and a new kitchen, this property must be viewed to be appreciated. Entrance Hall, Reception Hall, Lounge Dining Room, Kitchen, Bedroom One, Bedroom Two, Garden Room, Bathroom, Garage, Parking, Gardens.

Price: £177,950

T: 01691 670 320

NO CHAIN DETACHED BUNGALOW

Croeswylan Crescent, Oswestry



OC5603

This three bedroom detached bungalow is situated in a most desirable and quiet location. In need of some modernisation but does benefit from gas fired central heating and double glazed. The accommodation comprises: Reception Hall, Lounge, Kitchen Breakfast Room, Three Bedrooms, Shower Room, Gardens to Front, Side and to the Rear overlooking playing field, Garage, Parking.

Price: £189,950

T: 01691 670 320

HOUSE & ANNEXE

Plas Cerrig, Wern



OC3991

This extraordinary detached family home dates back to approx 1810. The property is complemented by a detached annexe and delightful gardens. Hall, Dining Room, Lounge, Sitting Room, Kitchen, Pantry, Utility, WC, Master Bedroom with Ensuite, Three Further Bedrooms, Bathroom, Annexe - Lounge, Kitchen, Bathroom Bedrooms. Garaging, Workshops, Store Rooms, Landscaped Gardens, Paddock, Parking. EPC E.

Price: £499,950

T: 01691 670 320

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Park Street Oswestry £255,000

- Spacious and well presented 4 Bedroom Detached Family Home
- Situated on a generous corner plot in a popular residential area
- Entrance Hall, Family Room/Study, Dining Room, Lounge
- Kitchen, Utility, 4 Bedrooms (master en-suite) & Family Bathroom
- Private off road parking, single detached garage
- Well maintained front and rear gardens.
- Gas central heating and double glazing. EPC Rating D



Celyn House Weston Rhyn £324,950

- Substantial Detached 5 Bedroom Property
- 3 Reception Rms, Dining Rm, Kitchen, Utility, Cellar
- Ground Flr Bathroom, 5 Beds (2 en-suite) & Family Bathrm
- Mature & well maintained gardens & off-road parking
- Oil C/H & hardwood D/G. EPC Rating G



Berllan Close Weston Rhyn £205,000

- Detached 3 Bedroom Family Home
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge
- Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility
- 3 Beds, Family Bathroom
- Large mature garden
- Integral garage, double glazing
- Gas C/H. EPC Rating D



Ardmillan Close Oswestry £279,950

- Immaculately presented detached home
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Living Room
- Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility
- 4 Bedrooms & Family Bathroom
- Fully landscaped and terraced gardens.
- Extensive parking area and single garage
- uPVC D/G, Gas C/H. EPC Rating D



School Road Ruyton XI Towns £250,000

- An excellent period family home extending to 4 bedrooms
- The property has been tastefully extended and renovated
- Entrance Hall, Dining Room, Lounge, Kitchen, Utility
- Ground Floor Shower Rm & adjoining Living Room/Ground Floor Bed
- 3 Bedrooms, Study and Family Bathroom.
- Courtyard styled private gardens and off road parking
- UPVC double glazing and Oil C/H. EPC Rating G



Pentre Shrewsbury £200,000

- A superbly presented and spacious 2 Bedroom Detached House
- Situated approximately 2 miles from the popular village of Nesscliffe
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Cloakroom/WC
- Large Kitchen/Breakfast Room, 2 Double Bedrooms (en-suites)
- Large garden provides parking for several vehicles or caravan
- Double glazing and oil fired central heating. EPC Rating C
- NO CHAIN



Cae Gwynn Close Morda £190,000

- Superbly appointed 4 Bedroom Detached House
- The property has been maintained to the highest of standard
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen
- Utility, Cloakroom, Conservatory
- 4 Bedrooms (master en-suite) & Family Bathroom
- Enclosed rear garden with patio, Driveway parking and garage
- Gas fired central heating and double glazing. EPC Rating C



Y Berllan Llangedwyn £169,995

- A spacious 3 Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- In an elevated position with views over and across the Tanat Valley
- Entrance Hall, Living Room, Kitchen/Diner, Utility Room
- Garden Room, 3 Bedrooms and Bathroom
- Front and side gardens including large gravelled driveway and single garage.
- Oil central heating and double glazing are installed throughout. EPC rating



Henley Drive Oswestry £171,000

- Immaculate 3 Bed Detached Property
- Entrance Hall, Cloaks, Lounge
- Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility
- 3 Beds (master en-suite) & Family Bathroom
- Well stocked and established gardens
- Off-road parking with potential for garage
- uPVC D/G, gas central heating, EPC Rating C



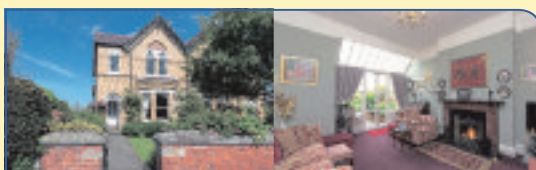
Church Lane St Martins £174,995

- NO CHAIN
- A spacious 3 Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- Entrance Hall, Living Room, Kitchen/Dining Room
- 3 Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- The property is in need of modernisation throughout
- Electric heating and timber D/G
- EPC Rating D



Croesbach Oswestry £450,000

- Spacious 3 Bedroom Detached Cottage/Smallholding
- With Outbuildings, Stables, Field Shelters and 10.75 Acres
- UPVC Double Glazing
- Oil Central Heating
- Double Garage & Ample Parking
- EPC Rating F



Queen's Road Oswestry £350,000

- A superbly appointed Period Residence
- Entrance Hall, Cloaks, Lounge, Living Room
- Dining Rm, Kitchen/Breakfast Rm, Rear Hallway, Shower rm
- Spacious Guest Suite with En-Suite
- 4 further Bedrooms (1 with En-Suite)
- Study, Family Bathrm, garage & parking
- Gas C/H, EPC Rating F

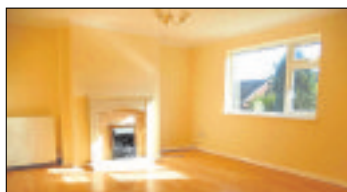


Spacious detached home has great views

A spacious four-double bedroomed modern detached family house, The Firlands, 2 Withy Avenue, Forden, Welshpool is tastefully presented and well appointed throughout. In a premier area of a popular village and having been greatly improved by the current owners, it is for sale through Norman Lloyd at £285,000. With a private gated driveway with gardens to the front and rear with views towards the Long Mountain countryside and Red Woods, the Offa's Dyke footpath is also close at hand.

For further information contact Norman Lloyd on 01938 552371 or visit www.normanlloyd.co.uk

norman lloyd



Modern house has glorious views

A semi-detached three bedroom modern house located in the popular town of Llanfair Caereinion with off-street parking, 16 Maes Derwen has glorious views to the rear across open countryside, offering an exciting opportunity for a first time buyer or as an investment. The property is for sale through Halls for £119,000. Built of brick under a pitched tiled roof with comfortable accommodation which provides for storm porch, entrance hall, good sized sitting room, fitted kitchen/breakfast room, first floor landing, three bedrooms and bathroom. For further details contact Halls on 01938 555552.

Halls 1845

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The Oswestry Visitor and Exhibition Centre



Oswestry Visitor and Exhibition Centre's Sue Miller takes a look at Owen's letters

War poet's letters to mother on display

A FASCINATING insight into the mind of Shropshire poet Wilfred Owen as he saw the horrors of war unfold a century ago has been put on display in the town in which he was born.

In the letters written to his mother Susan, Wilfred, born at Plas Wilmot in Oswestry, tells of the inhumane suffering of his men and describes scenes that go on to appear in his poems.

And in happier times before his life on the front line he writes excitedly about looking forward to training at the Oswestry camp which was apparently well known as "a miserable camp".

The display is being held at Oswestry Visitor and Exhibition Centre, an historic building tucked away in the grounds of St Oswald's Parish Church in the town centre. Sue Miller, exhibitions co-ordinator said it had excited a lot of interest.

"People have been very moved reading the letters," she said.

Mr Owen served in the First World War and was killed on the front line just days before peace was declared.

He wrote to his mother daily when he could and pulled no punches about what he saw, beginning his letters, "My own sweet mother".

In one letter written in January 1917 he said: "I have suffered seventh hell."

"I have not been at the front."

"I have been in front of it."

"I held an advanced post, that is, a dug-out in the middle of No Man's Land."

In another he said: "I can endure cold and fatigue and the face-to-face death as well as another but not the universal pervasiveness of ugliness.....everything unnatural, broken...unburial bodies sit outside the dug outs all day."

In one letter he describes the blinding of a sentry that he went on to write about in his Poem, The Sentry.

However when he began his war Owen

SPECIAL REPORT

By Sue Austin

was in a more upbeat mood and in one letter talked of being posted to Oswestry.

On September 16 he wrote: "This is a good war today: I just heard that we go to the Oswestry camp next week, Thursday I think, for a while."

"It has a reputation for being a wretched camp and all the officers are in a bad way about it."

"But I wink at the ceiling."

"Was just opening your letter when the name of Oswestry fell on my ears!"

The display is upstairs in the Oswestry Visitor and Exhibition Centre.

The letters on display give an insight into how Owen felt about conflict.

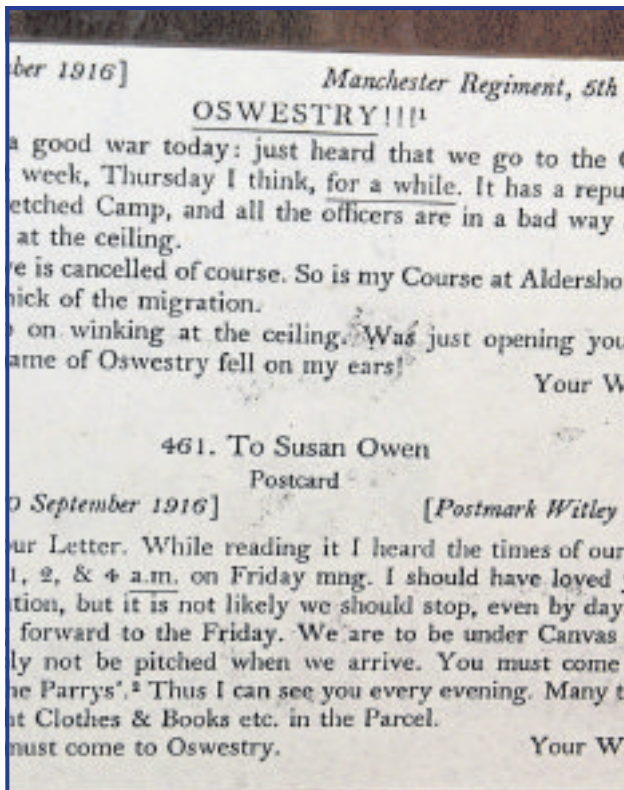
He went on to become one of the leading poets of the First World War.

His shocking, realistic war poetry on the horrors of trenches and gas warfare was heavily influenced by his friend and mentor Siegfried Sassoon, and stood in stark contrast both to the public perception of war at the time and to the confidently patriotic verse written by earlier war poets such as Rupert Brooke.

Among his best-known works - most of which were published posthumously - are "Dulce et Decorum est", "Insensibility", "Anthem for Doomed Youth", "Futility" and "Strange Meeting".

On October 21, 1915, he enlisted in the Artists' Rifles Officers' Training Corps. On June 4 1916 he was commissioned as a second lieutenant (on probation) in the Manchester Regiment. He was injured during his war service and sent to Craiglockhart War Hospital in Edinburgh for treatment. It was while recuperating at Craiglockhart that he met fellow poet Siegfried Sassoon, an encounter that was to transform Owen's life.

He returned to war and was killed in action on November 4 1918 during the crossing of the Sambre-Oise Canal, exactly one week before the signing of the Armistice.



Letters from Wilfred Owen have gone on display at Oswestry

TRAIN YOUR DOG

IN a regular Chronicle feature, dog expert Greg Burgess is giving hints on good animal care. This week he looks at selecting the right dog.

Selecting the right dog is essential if you are to have a pet or working dog that fits into both your lifestyle and your home. It is not only the breed of dog that you need to consider but also the age and even its existing level of training or obedience. Thousands of dogs are either rehomed or end up in shelters every year. A little more forethought before buying a dog could prevent a large number of these cases.

The first question to ask is if you can commit to caring for a dog long term. The average lifespan of a dog is between 10 and 13 years. If you can commit to feeding, training, exercising and caring for a dog for this period only then should you consider which breed you would like.

With the Kennel Club recognising over 200 different breeds and with the proliferation of designer breeds, select-



ing on a breed can be quite a challenge. Although a dog's appearance is important greater consideration should be given to its size, temperament, exercise requirements, trainability and whether you intend on working the dog.

If you prefer to spend your evenings watching television rather than going for long country walks then having a more high energy breed such as a spaniel, collie or some

with Greg Burgess

of the terrier breeds may not be the right choice for you. It is also important to have easy access to areas where you can exercise your dog. More active breeds benefit from being exercised off the lead so making sure you can easily access a park, field or beach etc. is vital in ensuring that your dog gets the exercise they need. If you are looking for a puppy be sure to research what the breed looks like as it gets older. This can be difficult with cross-breeds as characteristics from either parent may prove to be more prominent when fully grown. All puppies are cute but some can change dramatically as they get older so understanding what they will be like as an adult dog is essential.

Puppies also require a great deal of time and attention. So if cleaning up little accidents and having your favourite slippers chewed doesn't sound like fun then consider an older dog or a part or fully trained dog.

Once you have your dog committing to regular training will ensure that you get the best out of your new companion. Starting off the right way will enable your dog to learn the right behaviours from day one.

For further advice and information on training contact Greg at www.gooddogsandgundogs.co.uk or tel. 01691 870651 mob. 07541 994782.

London City Break

London, England's capital has history stretching back to Roman times. At its centre stand the imposing Houses of Parliament, the iconic 'Big Ben' clock tower and Westminster Abbey, site of British monarch coronations. Across the Thames, the London Eye observation wheel provides panoramic views of the South Bank cultural complex, and the entire city.

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Pointless Celebrities

6pm

Taking part are 1980s TV fitness instructor Lizzie Webb and This Morning doctor Chris Steele, Dancing on Ice's Robin Cousins Rosemary Conley, Welsh sprinter Iwan Thomas and former Olympian Katharine Merry, and Embarrassing Bodies consultants Dr Dawn Harper and Dr Pixie McKenna.



Insert Name Here

11.15pm

Comedians Hugh Dennis, Omid Djalili and Roisin Conaty and anatomist and broadcaster Alice Roberts join team captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name, with the winners earning the right to pick the greatest bearer of the moniker.



Ninja Warrior UK

7pm

Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host as the fourth heat of gets under way. More competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage on the obstacle course, and those who make it to the end of the run face one final task - scaling the heights of Mount Midoriyama.



World's Weirdest Homes

7.30pm

Charlie Luxton presents a guide to 20 of the most unusual residences ever built, before revealing what he considers the weirdest house on Earth. Residences featured include a skip that provides living space for an artist, a perfect replica of the house from The Munsters and a house shaped like a giant beagle.



The Championship: Football League Tonight

9pm

Kelly Cates and George Riley present highlights of the weekend's matches in the second tier, including Sheffield Wednesday against Leeds United. Elsewhere, Brighton & Hove Albion take on Blackburn Rovers, and Hull City entertained Charlton Athletic.

BBC1	
6.00	Breakfast.
10.00	Saturday Kitchen Live. James Martin invites actress Georgia May Foote to face her food heaven or her food hell. He is also joined by fellow chefs John Torode and Cary Doherty.
11.30	James Martin: Home Comforts. The chef demonstrates dishes to impress friends and family, preparing a lemon posset, as well as beer-braised beef cheeks. With BBC Breakfast weather presenter Carol Kirkwood.
12.00	BBC News; Weather.
12.10	Football Focus. Dan Walker looks ahead to the weekend's Premier League matches, and review the key moments from the third round of the FA Cup.
12.50	Saturday Sportsday. A look ahead at the day's events.
1.00	Live Snooker: The Masters. Hazel Irvine presents coverage of the opening semi-final from Alexandra Palace, London, where the first player to win six frames will progress. Coverage continues on BBC2.
4.30	Final Score. Jason Mohammad presents a round-up of this afternoon's results from the Premier League, Football League and Scotland.
5.10	Now You See It. Mel Giedroyc shows us more light-hearted clips from the magic world, courtesy of the likes of Penn and Teller, Dynamo, DMC and Troy.
5.40	BBC News.
5.50	Midlands Today; Weather.
6.00	Pointless Celebrities. Lizzie Webb, Chris Steele, Robin Cousins, Rosemary Conley, Iwan Thomas, Katharine Merry, Dr Dawn Harper and Dr Pixie McKenna compete in a "health and fitness" edition of the quiz.
6.50	The Getaway Car. New series. Five pairs of contestants head to South Africa to test their nerves, driving and communication skills in a series of car-based challenges. Presented by Dermot O'Leary.
7.45	The Voice UK. A cage fighter, a drag queen and a man who once sung with the Beatles display their vocal talents to Paloma Faith, Boy George, Will.i.am and Ricky Wilson in "blind auditions".
9.05	Casualty. Ethan desperately searches a stretched-to-capacity ED for a bed to accommodate a critically ill elderly woman, and a young couple's plans to go travelling are halted by a car crash.
9.55	The National Lottery Live. Gaby Roslin presents as the all-important winning numbers are revealed.
10.05	BBC News; Weather.
10.25	Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Manchester City v Crystal Palace at the Etihad Stadium and Chelsea v Everton at Stamford Bridge; National Lottery Update.
11.50	Snooker: The Masters - Extra. Hazel Irvine presents extended highlights of the opening semi-final in this year's tournament, which took place at Alexandra Palace, London.
1.50	Weather for the Week Ahead.
1.55	BBC News.

BBC2	
6.05	Race to Super Bowl 50. Highlights of the latest NFL fixtures. (R)
6.55	FILM: Wonder Man (1945). An entertainer is killed on the orders of a gangster and returns as a ghost to try to persuade his twin to avenge his death. Comedy musical, starring Danny Kaye and Virginia Mayo.
8.30	FILM: The Prisoner of Zenda (1952). An Englishman agrees to pose as the king of a European country, but has to keep up the deception when the real monarch is kidnapped. Adventure, with Stewart Granger and James Mason.
10.10	Homes Under the Hammer. Developers Lucy Alexander and Martin Roberts explore a loch house in Hertford, a dwelling in London and a three-bedroom property in Manchester. (R)
11.10	Natural World. Satish Kumar explores Dartmoor's woods and rivers. (R)
12.00	James Martin: Home Comforts. A glimpse of the chef off duty at home in his own kitchen. (R)
12.45	James Martin: Home Comforts. The chef cooks in his own kitchen. (R)
1.30	Bargain Hunt. From Grimsthorpe Castle, Lincolnshire. (R)
2.15	Escape to the Country. A rural property in Cornwall. (R)
3.00	For What It's Worth. With guest Charles Hanson. (R)
3.45	Flog It! Valuing items in Malvern, Worcestershire. (R)
4.30	Live Snooker: The Masters. The concluding frames of the opening semi-final.
5.30	Victorian Bakers. Four bakers experience what their profession was like in the 1870s. (R)
6.30	Dad's Army. Warden Hodges challenges Captain Mainwaring's platoon to a cricket match. Featuring a guest appearance by former England and Yorkshire fast bowler Fred Trueman. (R)
7.00	Live Snooker: The Masters. Hazel Irvine presents coverage of the second semi-final from Alexandra Palace, London, where the line-up for the final will be confirmed over the best of 11 frames. Subsequent programmes subject to change.
10.30	QI XL. Panellists Sue Perkins, Romesh Ranganathan, Bill Bailey and Alan Davies compete, as Stephen Fry hosts an extended edition of the quiz show.
11.15	Insert Name Here. Hugh Dennis, Omid Djalili, Roisin Conaty and Alice Roberts join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name. (R)
11.45	Dragons' Den. The panel of entrepreneurs casts an eye over more ideas, including an innovative camping stove and a reimagining of hard-boiled eggs. Evan Davis presents. (R)
12.45	FILM: Spider (2002). A schizophrenic pieces together the traumatic childhood events that led to his condition. David Cronenberg's psychological thriller, starring Ralph Fiennes and Miranda Richardson.
2.20	This is BBC2. Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC2.

ITV	
6.00	CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge 6.25 Pat & Stan 6.35 Dino Dan 6.45 Dino Dan 7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story 7.05 Sooty 7.15 Super 4
7.30	Scrambled!: Scrambled! Two hours of children's fun.
7.35	Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. Chaotic cartoon capers, voiced by Rowan Atkinson. (R)
7.50	Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. Cartoon about a mischievous youngster. (R)
8.10	Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. Animated comedy.
8.30	Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. A modern remake of the classic 1960s adventure series.
9.05	Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show. Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
9.25	Murder, She Wrote. A jeweller is murdered and a famous actress's tiara is stolen. (R)
10.15	The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
11.20	The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
12.20	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
12.30	The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
1.30	Judge Rinder. Real-life cases in a studio courtroom. (R)
2.35	Tippling Point. Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard. (R)
3.35	Doc Martin. The medic delivers bad news to a former teacher. (R)
4.30	The Martin Lewis Money Show. Investigating whether high street banks are short-changing their customers. (R)
5.00	The Saturday Night Story. Part one of two. Celebrating moments from Saturday night TV. (R)
6.05	ITV News Central; Weather.
6.15	ITV News and Weather.
6.30	New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates more viewer-submitted comical mishaps, including an unusual take on Ninja Warrior UK and a fine example of why bicycle selfies are a bad idea.
7.00	Ninja Warrior UK. Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the fourth heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in the obstacle-course challenge.
8.00	Take Me Out. An Irish dancer, a diamond consultant, a musician and an ice hockey player seek the approval of Paddy McGuinness's 30 single women.
9.20	The Jonathan Ross Show. Veteran actor Michael Caine visits the studio for his first British chat show appearance in nearly 10 years, along with Creed stars Michael B Johnson and Sylvester Stallone.
10.20	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.35	FILM: Lethal Weapon 4 (1998). The mismatched LAPD detectives hunt down the head of a Chinese triad gang involved in forgery and slave trading. Action adventure, starring Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Rene Russo and Joe Pesci.
12.50	Jackpot247. Interactive gaming.
3.00	Murder, She Wrote. (R)
3.50	ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.

Channel 4	
6.15	How I Met Your Mother. Ted and Stella disagree about where they should live. (R)
6.40	The King of Queens. Doug tells too many home truths. (R)
7.05	The King of Queens. Doug makes an unsettling discovery. (R)
7.30	Ironman Switzerland. Highlights of the event from Zurich.
8.00	Everybody Loves Raymond. Geoffrey has trouble getting the hang of a game. (R)
8.30	Everybody Loves Raymond. Debra's parents join the Barones for Thanksgiving. (R)
9.00	The Morning Line. Rishi Persad presents a preview of the day's main race meetings.
10.00	FILM: Flash Gordon (1980). Sci-fi comic-strip adventure, starring Sam J Jones.
12.10	The Big Bang Theory. Pilot episode of the comedy, starring Jim Parsons. (R)
12.35	Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. New series. Coulson searches the world for people with superpowers.
1.30	Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Warwick, Wetherby and Chelmsford City.
4.00	Come Dine with Me. Terry Houlihan hosts the first party in south-east London. (R)
4.35	Come Dine with Me. Ita Egan hosts the second party in south-east London. (R)
5.05	Come Dine with Me. Jon Revell hosts the third party in south-east London. (R)
5.35	Come Dine with Me. Oliver Gillie hosts the final party in south-east London. (R)
6.05	Channel 4 News.
6.35	Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp helps two friends who are pooling their resources to buy a shared home in East London, while Phil Spencer helps a local woman hoping to make an investment. (R)
7.30	World's Weirdest Homes. Charlie Luxton presents a guide to 20 of the most unusual residences ever built. Featuring an artist who lives in a skip, a converted missile silo and a house shaped like a dog. (R)
9.00	FILM: Fast & Furious 6 (2013). Premiere. A gang of fugitives reunites to take down a criminal syndicate that is aided by a friend they thought was dead. Action thriller sequel, with Vin Diesel, Dwayne Johnson and Michelle Rodriguez.
11.40	FILM: The Running Man (1987). A convict takes part in a brutal TV game show in which he is hunted by a series of gadget-wielding killers. Sci-fi action adventure, with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Richard Dawson, Yaphet Kotto, Maria Conchita Alonso and Richard Dawson.
1.30	Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Tony tells Alfie he has seen the DNA results. (R)
3.30	Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. A house belonging to a family of horse enthusiasts. (R)
4.30	The Fabulous Baker Brothers. New series. Henry and Tom modernise a cafe in Blackpool.
5.25	1001 Things You Should Know. (R)
5.50	How I Met Your Mother. (R)

Channel 5	
6.00	Milkshake!: Peppa Pig 6.05 Bananas in Pyjamas 6.15 Bob the Builder 6.30 Ticky Toc 6.40 Zack and Quack 6.50 Roobarb and Custard Too 7.00 Make Way for Noddy 7.10 Paw Patrol 7.25 Little Princess 7.35 Pip Ahoy! 7.50 Blaze and the Monster Machines 8.15 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 8.30 Wanda and the Alien 8.45 Toby's Travelling Circus
8.55	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R)
9.30	The Saturday Show.
11.35	Police Interceptors. (R)
12.30	Police Interceptors. An officer has an early morning encounter with a drunk driver. (R)
1.30	FILM: Columbo: A Matter of Honour (1976). Crime drama, starring Peter Falk.
3.00	Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. A couple who unwittingly rented a property to a confidence trickster. (R)
4.00	Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild. A former fighter pilot farming in the foothills of the Himalayas. (R)
5.00	Ice Road Truckers. The ice roads begin to melt and crack. (R)
6.00	5 News Weekend.
6.05	World War II in Colour. How Britain remained defiant after the retreat from Dunkirk, the development of radar and a breakthrough in cracking German codes that helped it win the Battle of Britain. (R)
7.00	World War II Battlefield Recovery. Excavation experts set out to retrieve Second World War relics from the battlefields of the Eastern Front, telling the stories of fallen soldiers by examining their remains.
8.00	Chasing Monsters. Adventurer Cyril Chauquet visits remote waters to seek out the colossal goliath grouper, the world's largest marine fish, which can grow to more than 800 pounds.
9.00	The Championship: Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's second-tier matches, including a Yorkshire derby as Sheffield Wednesday met Leeds United at Hillsborough.
10.00	Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. Kelly Cates and George Riley present all the goals from League One and League Two, where fixtures included Bradford City v Oldham Athletic and Accrington Stanley v Portsmouth.
10.30	Celebrity Big Brother. Highlights of the famous housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another.
11.30	Lip Sync Battle UK: Jason Manford v Michelle Keegan. Melanie Brown and Professor Green present the musical game show as comedian Jason Manford and actress Michelle Keegan go head to head lip-synching to a hit song. (R)
12.00	SuperCasino.
3.10	Celebrity Big Brother. (R)
4.00	Celebrity Big Brother: Heroes and Villains. (R)
4.50	House Doctor. (R)



War & Peace

9pm

Pierre fights a duel with Dolokhov, and the outcome inspires him to change his life. Helene re-enters high society and pursues a new relationship, while Andrei is consumed with guilt and seeks seclusion. The count tries to control his spending, while Natasha and Sonya both receive proposals.



Live Snooker: The Masters

7pm

Hazel Irvine presents concluding coverage of the final from Alexandra Palace, London, where a maximum of 11 frames will be played to decide this year's champion. With commentary by Dennis Taylor, Ken Doherty, Stephen Hendry, John Virgo, Steve Davis and John Parrott.



Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands

7pm

Slean has disappeared without trace, so Beowulf and Rheda head into the forest to find him. However, with enemies on all sides, the woods are a dangerous place and Rheda comes under increasing pressure to identify the traitor among her inner circle.



Walking the Himalayas

8pm

Levison Wood returns to the site of his car crash to resume the journey, and is reunited with the people who saved his life. He keeps a promise to Binod by accompanying him on a trek to his family home in Pokhara, before continuing their travels with members of the Gurung tribe.



Eat Pray Love

10pm

Premiere. A woman realises that none of the things she has strived to achieve have brought her any happiness. Following her divorce, she is left unsure of what to do with her life, so embarks on a journey round the world, hoping to find the inner peace she has always lacked. Drama, starring Julia Roberts.

BBC1

- 6.00 Breakfast.**
7.35 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Manchester City v Crystal Palace and Chelsea v Everton. (R)
9.00 The Andrew Marr Show.
10.00 The Big Questions. Nicky Campbell discusses on topical issues live from Harris Academy, Peckham.
11.00 Sunday Politics West Midlands. The week's events at Westminster, presented by Andrew Neil.
12.15 Bargain Hunt. From Hungerford in Berkshire. (R)
1.00 BBC News; Weather.
1.15 Homes Under the Hammer. Lucy Alexander and Martin Roberts explore a development in Kyle of Lochalsh in the Highlands, a property with a converted stable block in Kent and a mid-terrace house in Liverpool. (R)
2.15 Eat Well for Less? A tale of two fish-and-chip dinners. (R)
3.15 Escape to the Country. Highlights of the series from Somerset.
4.15 Lifeline. Appeal on behalf of Riding for the Disabled.
4.25 Songs of Praise. Report on the clean-up after the floods in Cumbria.
5.00 Great Barrier Reef with David Attenborough. Examining the future of the reef. Last in the series. (R)
6.00 BBC News.
6.20 Midlands Today; Weather.
6.30 Countryfile. Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison explore Gloucestershire, visiting an arboretum and a birds of prey centre. Plus, Josh Widdicombe visits a Welsh campsite that holds special memories.
7.30 Still Open All Hours. A bridegroom has cold feet, and it falls to Granville to ensure he makes it to the wedding. Mrs Featherstone continues her search for a husband, and spies two likely candidates.
8.00 Call the Midwife. New series. Patsy helps to deliver a severely deformed baby, and the sisters rally round to give the parents the support they need. A keep fit class leads to a medical emergency.
9.00 War & Peace. Pierre fights a duel with Dolokhov, Natasha and Sonya both receive unexpected marriage proposals, and Nikolai makes the mistake of placing his trust in a dangerous friend.
10.00 BBC News.
10.20 Midlands Today; Weather.
10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Liverpool v Manchester United at Anfield and Stoke City v Arsenal at the Britannia Stadium.
11.30 FILM: The Devil's Double (2011). An Iraqi soldier is plunged into a world of murder and violence when he becomes a body double for Saddam Hussein's son. Fact-based drama, with Dominic Cooper and Ludvine Sagnier.
1.10 Weather for the Week Ahead.
1.15 BBC News.

BBC2

- 6.30 The A to Z of TV Gardening.** Carol Kirkwood continues her alphabetical journey through the world of horticulture, looking at subjects beginning with the letter I. (R)
7.15 Monty Don's Italian Gardens. The horticulturist visits some of the most romantic retreats in Naples and southern Italy, discovering why gardens in this part of the country are informal and filled with flowers. (R)
8.15 Countryfile. Matt Baker learns about oilseed-rape farming in Hertfordshire with chef Jean-Christophe Novelli, and Adam Henson meets the winner of last year's Countryfile Farming Hero award. (R)
9.15 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. James Martin presents highlights of the series, recalling his favourite moments from previous years in the kitchen.
10.45 James Martin: Home Comforts. The chef is joined by racing driver Jason Plato as he uses clever cooking techniques to serve up dishes that look lavish but are not expensive. (R)
11.30 James Martin: Home Comforts. Antonio Carluccio joins the host as he makes a boozy pudding that reminds him of French holidays and a tasty recipe he from a recent fishing trip. (R)
12.15 MOTD2 Extra. With Mark Chapman and the Match of the Day team.
1.00 Live Snooker: The Masters. Hazel Irvine presents coverage of the opening eight frames of the final from Alexandra Palace, London, where the best-of-19-frames match takes place. Subsequent programmes subject to change.
5.15 Ski Sunday. Highlights from Wengen, Switzerland.
6.00 World's Sneakiest Animals. Chris Packham features animals that utilise devious tactics to win a mate and raise a family, including bower birds and fiddler crabs, who use optical illusions to impress a female. Last in the series. (R)
7.00 Live Snooker: The Masters. Hazel Irvine presents concluding coverage of the final from Alexandra Palace, London, where a maximum of 11 frames will be played to decide this year's champion. Subsequent programmes subject to change.
11.00 FILM: Jo Nesbo's Headhunters (2011). A corporate headhunter moonlights as a thief, but his latest robbery leads him to uncover a dangerous secret. Crime thriller, starring Aksel Hennie and Nikolaj Coster-Waldau.
12.35 Sign Zone: Countryfile. Matt Baker learns about oilseed-rape farming in Hertfordshire with chef Jean-Christophe Novelli, and Adam Henson meets the winner of last year's Countryfile Farming Hero award. (R)
1.35 Sign Zone: Holby City. Essie allows her personal life to affect her work when she has to deal with a difficult mother-and-son relationship, while Guy's career goes from strength to strength. (R)
2.35 This is BBC2.

ITV

- 6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge**
6.25 Pat & Stan
6.35 Dino Dan
7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story
7.05 Sooty
7.15 Super 4
7.30 Scrambled! Scrambled! Two hours of children's fun.
7.35 Scrambled! Mr Bean: The Animated Series. Chaotic cartoon capers, voiced by Rowan Atkinson. (R)
7.50 Scrambled! Horrid Henry. Cartoon about a mischievous youngster. (R)
8.10 Scrambled! Nerds & Monsters. Animated comedy.
8.30 Scrambled! Bear Grylls Survival School. Children are taught to survive in the wild.
9.05 Scrambled! The Tom & Jerry Show. Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
9.25 Murder, She Wrote. Jessica defends the memory of her late husband. (R)
10.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
11.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
12.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
1.30 ITV News and Weather; Weather.
1.35 Catchphrase. Guessing game, hosted by Stephen Mulhern. (R)
2.20 Ninja Warrior UK. The fourth heat of the obstacle-course challenge gets under way. (R)
3.20 FILM: You Only Live Twice (1967). James Bond spy thriller, starring Sean Connery.
5.35 ITV News Central; Weather.
5.45 ITV News and Weather.
6.00 Unbelievable Moments Caught on Camera. Part two of two. Alastair Stewart presents footage of extraordinary animal rescues, including a couple who came to the aid of a humpback whale that had got caught in fishing nets.
7.00 Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands. Rheda leads a search for Slean, who has disappeared without trace – but is also under increasing pressure to identify the traitor before her people turn against her.
8.00 Endeavour. The detective investigates the disappearance of a Dutch au pair and discovers a connection to an earlier unsolved case as conflict erupts between his fellow officers.
10.00 ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.20 Joanna Lumley's Trans-Siberian Adventure. Joanna concludes her journey, visiting the city where the Russian royal family was killed, before returning to the place where she was photographed in 1966. Last in the series. (R)
11.20 Perspectives: Eddie Redmayne on War Art. Actor Eddie Redmayne explores how conflict has inspired creativity, visiting studios and battlefields locations to reveal the unique legacy left by war artists. (R)
12.15 Jackpot247. Interactive gaming.
3.00 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R)
3.40 ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.
5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)

Channel 4

- 6.15 How I Met Your Mother.** Stella's sister is jilted. (R)
6.40 The King of Queens. Carrie returns to college. (R)
7.05 The King of Queens. Doug makes a rash purchase. (R)
7.30 Everybody Loves Raymond. Robert is mistaken for Raymond. (R)
7.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. Frank causes trouble by stealing a football. (R)
8.30 Frasier. The Crane brothers throw a dinner party. (R)
9.00 Frasier. Niles tries to reclaim his apartment. (R)
9.30 Sunday Brunch. With Sam and Mark, Dakota Blue Richards and David Hasselhoff.
12.30 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. A campervan made of old CDs and vinyl records. (R)
1.30 Location, Location, Location. House-hunting in east London. (R)
2.35 The Big Bang Theory. Penny regrets her night with Raj. (R)
3.05 The Big Bang Theory. Amy is caught in a conflict between Sheldon and Penny. (R)
3.30 The Big Bang Theory. Leonard accompanies Amy to a colleague's wedding. (R)
3.55 The Simpsons. The town's graveyard is moved. (R)
4.25 The Simpsons. Milhouse's estranged parents consider a reconciliation. (R)
4.55 The Simpsons. Marge buys a tandem. (R)
5.30 FILM: Epic (2013). Premiere. Animated adventure, with the voice of Amanda Seyfried.
7.30 Channel 4 News.
8.00 Walking the Himalayas. Levison Wood returns to the site of his car crash to resume the journey, and keeps a promise to Binod by accompanying him on a trek to his family home in Pokhara.
9.00 Deutschland 83. While at a Nato conference, Moritz gets an assignment to seduce a security analyst's secretary, and also receives word that his mother is on the shortlist for a kidney transplant.
10.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show, with guests Jason Manford and Roisin Conaty joining forces with team captains Sean Lock and Jon Richardson. (R)
11.05 FILM: The Final Destination (2009). Four teenagers escape being killed in a tragedy at a racetrack – only to start dying in a series of gruesome accidents. Horror sequel, starring Bobby Campo and Shantel VanSanten.
12.35 15 Kids and Counting. (R)
1.30 Come Dine with Me. (R)
2.00 Come Dine with Me. (R)
2.30 Come Dine with Me. (R)
3.00 Come Dine with Me. (R)
3.25 Come Dine with Me. (R)
3.55 The Fabulous Baker Brothers.
4.50 Kirstie's Vintage Gems. (R)
5.00 The Restoration Man. Revisiting a builder who converted a former 18th-century folly. (R)

Channel 5

- 6.00 Milkshake!** Peppa Pig
6.05 Bananas in Pyjamas
6.15 Angelina Ballerina
6.30 Bob the Builder
6.45 Tickety Toc
6.55 Zack and Quack
7.05 Roobarb and Custard Too
7.15 Make Way for Noddy
7.25 Paw Patrol
7.40 Little Princess
7.50 Pip Ahoy!
8.00 Blaze and the Monster Machines
8.25 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
8.40 Wanda and the Alien
8.55 Toby's Travelling Circus
9.10 Jelly Jamm
9.30 LazyTown
9.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Shredder's new henchmen, Bebop and Rocksteady, attack the turtles. (R)
10.30 The Championship: Football League Tonight. Highlights and all the goals from the second tier. (R)
11.30 Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. Highlights and all the goals from League One and League Two. (R)
11.55 Police Interceptors. A violent man gives officers the runaround. (R)
12.55 Police Interceptors. Craggy has an early morning encounter with a polecat. (R)
1.55 FILM: Blue Streak (1999). Comedy, starring Martin Lawrence.
3.40 FILM: Cheaper By the Dozen 2 (2005). Comedy sequel, starring Steve Martin.
5.25 FILM: George of the Jungle (1997). Comedy, starring Brendan Fraser.
7.10 FILM: Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls (1995). The eccentric pet detective is coaxed out of exile in a Buddhist monastery to search for a missing sacred bat in the African jungle. Comedy sequel, with Jim Carrey and Simon Callow. Edited for language and sexual content.
8.55 5 News Weekend.
9.00 Celebrity Big Brother. The ups and downs of life in the BB house as friendships and alliances are made, battle lines are drawn and arguments erupt.
10.00 FILM: Eat Pray Love (2010). Premiere. A divorced woman goes on a journey around the world, hoping to find the inner peace she feels she has always lacked. Drama, starring Julia Roberts and James Franco.
12.40 Tattoo Disasters UK. A drunken man who used a tattoo gun to etch names on his arms. (R)
1.05 SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
3.10 Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. Cameras follow Southend magician Barry, who has arrived in Benidorm to forge a new life, and Essex couple Mick and Karen, who are buying the Showboat Cabaret Bar. (R)
4.00 House Doctor. A cottage with too many personal touches. (R)
4.25 House Doctor. A property in Spennymoor, Co Durham. (R)
4.50 House Doctor. A bland property near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. (R)
5.20 House Doctor. A cluttered B&B on the Norfolk coast. (R)
5.45 Angels of Jarm. A song about burgers. (R)
5.50 Angels of Jarm. (R)

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Kia Optima's evolution

By James Parker

The fourth-generation Optima has a modern, new exterior, a bold interior design with more space for occupants, new technologies and a wide choice of efficient powertrains.

The new model offers greater refinement and improved ride and handling over the outgoing model, while retaining the sporty image that has helped Optima become one of Kia's best-selling models worldwide.

The Kia Optima plays an important role in the Kia Motors Europe product line-up, introducing the brand to an increasing number of new customers. Since the third-generation model launched in 2011, with its distinctive look, high-quality interior and high-tech image, the Optima has offered buyers something fresh and different in the D-segment.

The all-new Optima's evolutionary new look was designed to be functional and sporty, with exterior dimensions that are marginally longer, taller and wider. These changes enable a roomier and more comfortable cabin, with more head-, shoulder- and rear-seat leg-room and greater cargo capacity.

This model is the most aerodynamic Optima to date, with drag reduced from 0.3 to 0.29 Cd.

The all-new Kia Optima will be available in Europe in a choice of nine colours, with

alloy wheels ranging from 16-in to 18in diameter.

The material quality of the all-new Optima's cabin is significantly improved over the outgoing model, with a far higher proportion of soft-touch materials, as well as cloth and leather trim in natural tones.

Tasteful metallic accents throughout the cabin add a higher quality ambience to the interior.

The larger interior and exterior dimensions ensure that the all-new model is the most practical, spacious and comfortable. Cargo space has grown from 505 to 510 litres (VDA), with the under-floor storage area and a wider boot opening adding greater practicality.

High-strength

It features a uniquely engineered body which combines more high-strength materials than ever before, resulting in even higher standards of crash safety. While passive safety is improved, the new model is also equipped with a series of high-tech active and autonomous safety features, and Kia's engineers have targeted a five-star Euro NCAP safety rating throughout the Optima's development programme.

Kia's vehicle stability management is fitted as standard, ensuring stability under braking and cornering by controlling the car's electronic stability control and electric motor-driven power steering if it detects a loss of traction.

The Optima is available with a wide range of optional active hazard-avoidance technologies, depending on market.



.....
The new model offers greater refinement and improved ride and handling
.....

Improving ride and handling was a top priority for Kia's dynamic development teams, with a focus on delivering the ride comfort and stability customers expect from a D-segment sedan, while achieving the level of agility promised by the car's sportier appearance.

The all-new Optima debuts a number of new, advanced on-board technologies to improve usability, comfort and convenience.

The touchscreen infotainment system is paired with a six-speaker audio system as standard.

A powerful Harman Kardon premium sound system, featuring 10 speakers, an external amplifier and Clari-Fi MP3 restoration technology, is also available as an option.

The all-new Kia Optima will offer the company's unique seven-year, 150,000km warranty as standard.

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2012 12	VW PASSAT 2.0 TDi Bluemotion Auto 4-door. Silver Metallic, 16,900 miles, FSH, Cruise Control.....	£12,499
2006 06	VW GOLF 1.4S 5-door, Manual, Silver Metallic, 62,000 miles	£3,999
2012 62	VW POLO 1.2S 5-door, Manual, Bronze Metallic, A/C, 15,000 miles, One Owner, FSH.....	£7,499
2010 59	VW POLO 1.6 TDi SE 5-door Manual. Bright Red, only 17,000 miles, FSH	SOLD
2008 08	VW TIGUAN 2.0 TDi SE Estate, Red Metallic, 6 Speed Manual, 47,000 miles, Privacy Glass, Roof Rails, 47,000 miles.....	£10,499



2007 07 MINI ONE 1.4 3-door
Hatchback, Red, 6 Speed Box,
53,000 miles, FSH £4,499



2008 08 NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 2.0 4x4 Diesel,
Silver Metallic, Leather, Panoramic
Roof, 59,000 miles **SOLD**



2013 63 CITROEN DS3 Dstyle Plus 1.6,
1 Owner, Bright Yellow Manual,
12,000 miles, FSH £8999



2010 10 RENAULT GRANDE SCENIC
1.5 DCi 7 Seater, Manual, Metallic
Red, 28,000 miles, FSH £6,999



2008 08 VW TIGUAN 2.0 TDi SE Estate,
Red Metallic, 6 Speed Manual, 47,000 miles,
Privacy Glass, Roof Rails, 47,000 miles £10,499



2010 60 LAND ROVER FREELANDER 2.2 TD4
XS New Shape Auto. Metallic Grey, Sat Nav,
Heated Seats, 51,000 miles, FSH £15,999



2012 62 MINI COUNTRYMAN COOPER S
2.0 Diesel All 4 5-door. Green, 1 Owner,
FSH, 19,900 MILES £14,499



2012 12 LAND ROVER FREELANDER
2.2 TD4 GS Manual. Metallic Grey,
48,000 miles, 1 Owner, FSH £15,499



2012 12 VW PASSAT 2.0 TDi
BLUEMOTION AUTO 4-door, Silver
Metallic, 16,900 miles, FSH, Cruise
Control £12,499



2011 11 NISSAN QASHQAI N-TEC
2.0 DCi 4x4 Manual. Metallic Gold,
Sat Nav, Sunroof, 1 Owner, 23,000
miles £13,999

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11 FORD MONDEO EDGE TDCI EST. SILVER, FULL SERV. HIST., ONE PREV. OWNER 64K.	£7,650
11 VW POLO SEL TdI 90 1.6 5 DOOR, SILVER, AC, ONE OWNER, ALLOY WHEELS, F.S.H 55K. £30 ROAD TAX.	£7,475
09 VW GOLF SE TdI, SILVER, AIR CON, ALLOY WHEELS, SERVICE HISTORY 55K.	£7,495
12 SUZUKI SPLASH SZ4, BLUE, FULL SERVICE HISTORY, ONE OWNER £30 ROAD TAX 10K.	£5,495
60 FIAT 500 LUNAR, GREY, SERVICE HISTORY, £30 ROAD TAX 25K.	£5,995
11 FORD FIESTA TITANIUM TDCI, BLACK, SERVICE HISTORY 52K.	£6,975
61 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.7 CDTI SE ECO FLEX 130PS, RED, ONE OWNER, F.S.H. £30 ROAD TAX 57K.	£5,795
12 NISSAN MICRA ACENTA 1.2 5 DOOR, MET. RED, FULL SERVICE HISTORY, £30 ROAD TAX 42K.	£5,495
60 PEUGEOT 207 S 1.4 5 DOOR, BLACK, AIR CON, ELEC. WINDOWS, SERVICE HIST 50K.	£4,795
09 RENAULT CLIO 1.2 EXTREME 3 DOOR, MET. BLUE, ALLOY WHEELS, SERV. HISTORY 30K.	£4,290
09 NISSAN NOTE 1.4 ACENTA, BEIGE, AIR CON, CRUISE CONTROL, ALLOY WHEELS, F.S.H 53K.	£4,195
60 PEUGEOT 207 SPORT CC HDI 1.6, GREY, SERVICE HISTORY 64K.	£3,995
57 PEUGEOT 207 SPORT COUPE, GREY 64K.	£3,995
09 PEUG 207 VERVE 1.4, 5 DR, BLUE, CO, AIR CON, ALLOY WHEELS, SERV. HIST 49K.	£3,995
09 CITROEN C3 EXECUTIVE HDI, GREY, AIR CON, ALLOY WHEELS, SERV. HIS. £30 ROAD TAX 49K.	£3,695
60 NISSAN PIXO N-TEC, GREY, SERVICE HISTORY £20 ROAD TAX 46K.	£3,650
08 RENAULT CLIO EXPRESSION 1.2 16V, BLACK, ALLOYS, SERVICE HISTORY 50K.	£3,495
06 SKODA FABIA ELEGANCE TDI, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY 123K.	£2,650
06 FIAT GRANDE PUNTO ACTIVE TURBO DIESEL 1.3, GREY, FULL SER. HIST., £30 ROAD TAX 64K.	£2,395
54 VAUXHALL ASTRA ENJOY CDTI, BLUE, SERVICE HISTORY 74K.	£2,150
05 FORD KA, SILVER, 2 OWNERS, LOW MILEAGE 22K.	£1,795
53 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 DESIGN, 5 DOOR, SILVER, SERVICE HISTORY 68K.	£1,650

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Motoring



Batch of nearly new cars

Arthurs of Newtown, the award winning Vauxhall dealer, has announced the purchase of a batch of 20 nearly new cars direct from the manufacturer.

Chris Venables, sales manager, explained that Arthurs had enjoyed a 'tremendous leap' in used car sales over the last few months and it was important they continued to have a good selection of used cars to sustain the increased sales through to the end of the year.

Chris said: "We try very hard to offer top quality cars at competitive prices

and Steve Hughes, group operations manager, has managed to negotiate a deal with Vauxhall to buy a batch of 20 used cars. These cars are starting to arrive and we hope they will all be at the dealership before Christmas.

"December is normally a quiet month for used car sales in our industry, but this year we have been pleasantly surprised by the amount of sales we have achieved, and we are building up nicely for a further increase in used car sales after Christmas.

"Arthurs is fortunate in being able to source large numbers of used cars direct from Vauxhall in addition to our normal flow of part exchanges. Many of the cars we purchase direct from Vaux-

hall are ex-management cars and have factory fitted options."

Chris added: "We have had a record year for used car sales in Newtown in 2015 with nearly 800 used cars sold and October was our best month ever with over 80 used cars sold. We intend to increase this further in 2016.

"Our secret is we have a great range of quality used cars which are priced very competitively.

"We are always keen to offer great deals and we have a team in Newtown who all work together to offer our customers a great service."

Pictured: Chris Venables reports a record year for used car sales at Arthurs of Newtown.

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£259* **£259***
DEPOSIT PER MONTH x36



KUGA ZETEC 2.0 TDCi 150
INC. METALLIC PAINT
Personal Contract Hire Offer
Non-maintained
P11D value: £26,735.00. Offer based on 10,000 miles per annum, excess mileage charges 7.09p/10.29p+VAT
£279* **£279***
INITIAL PAYMENT PER MONTH x35

REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE: 2016 FORD FIESTA ZETEC 125 82PS 3DR*

36 monthly payments	Cash price	Customer deposit	Deposit allowance	Amount of credit	Total amount payable (inc. £10 facility & purchase fee)	GMFV (optional final payment)	Mileage per annum	Excess mileage charge (pence per mile)	Term	2.9% APR Representative
£189.00	£11,723.48	£189.00	£1,060.00	£10,474.48	£12,386.00	£4,313.00	6,000	6.0	36 months	

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) Highest: Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) Highest: FORD All New Focus 2.0 EcoBoost (250PS) With Stop/Start - 5 Door, M6: Urban 32.1 (8.8), Extra Urban 49.6 (5.7), Combined 41.5 (6.8), CO₂ emissions 159g/km. Lowest: FORD Fiesta 1.0 EcoBoost (125PS) Stop/Start, M5: urban 52.3 (5.4), extra urban 76.3 (3.7), combined 65.7 (4.3). Official CO₂ emission 99g/km. Retail only. Subject to availability. Prices & details correct at time of publishing & are subject to change without notice. The Finance Deposit Allowance is only available when financed with Ford Credit. * Finance subject to status to UK residents aged 18 or over through Ford Credit. Guarantees/indemnities may be required. An Excess Mileage Charge will be payable if you decide to return the vehicle & the agreed annual mileage has been exceeded. Finance example figures are based on 6,000 miles per annum for illustration purposes & may vary depending on circumstances. Please note calls may be recorded for training & quality purposes. Furrows Group Ltd are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority as a credit broker but not as a lender. *Service offer subject to terms & conditions, please ask for full details. Details correct at time of publication, £600.



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TYPICAL EXAMPLE:	
TOTAL CASH PRICE	£3,500
APR	7.9%
LOAN PERIOD	60 MONTHS
WEEKLY PAYMENTS	£16
MONTHLY PAYMENTS	£67
TOTAL	£4,000

DEAL OF THE WEEK



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DEAL OF THE WEEK



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DEAL OF THE WEEK



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FORD FIESTA 1.4 TITANIUM 2010

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Focus fits the colour bill

By Graham Breeze

The new Ford Focus Zetec S Black or Red Edition is a dazzling newcomer with a choice of colour and styling – but why hasn't Ford gone further down the personalisation road?

Many manufacturers have spotted the current trend with buyers keen to add as many personal tastes, particularly colours, but Ford has decided to restrict choice to either black or red.

The results are great with a choice of striking two-tone paint schemes and a styling kit with sports bumpers, side skirts and rear spoiler, as well as 17-inch or 18-inch alloy wheels. But should they have offered a wider choice of colours, only time will tell. Painted either Race Red with black roof or Panther Black with red roof, both models feature contrasting colours for the mirrors, and the Black Edition tested also features contrasting front bumper detail and grille surround.

Red painted brake callipers are also a winning feature for me.

It's the same inside too where the contrasting theme continues with a black painted centre stack; black leather sports steering wheel and gear lever gaiter with red stitching; black leather handbrake lever and gaiter with red stitching; black floor mats with red stitching; and charcoal black sport seats with contrasting red stitching.

Of course the new Focus models are following closely on the heels of the Fiesta Zetec Red and Back Editions which have proved popular enough for Ford bosses who clearly think limiting choice to the two offerings is enough.

And unlike the Fiesta where power units are restricted to 1.0 litre the Focus comes with a choice of 1.0, 1.5 and 2.0 litre engines.

The 1.5 Ecoboost S Black Edition on test certainly looked the part standing on 17" alloys and with the upper and lower front grilles in attractive black honeycomb design power and there was performance to match.

Through a responsive six speed manual gearbox the 182PS unit produces a top speed of 138mph and there's 0-62mph in just 8.6 seconds.

Leader

Fuel figures are also surprisingly good with combined totals of 51.4pg and as much as 61.4mpg on the extra urban cycle.

Focus has always been a class leader when it comes to handling and this model is an equal to anything out there with sports suspension, electronic stability programme, traction control and emergency assist all combining to ensure you can stay on the road.

There's plenty of steering and seat adjustment to ensure a comfortable driving position but some of the opposition out there boast better leg room for rear seat passengers.

Boot space is fine with just enough room for the golf clubs.

Sports brake pedals and red stitching



.....
Many manufacturers have spotted the current trend with buyers keen to add as many personal tastes

on the sports-styled seats, handbrake and steering wheel add to the attraction and the fascia is typically Ford with an 8" touchscreen control centre and DAB audio system.

You get privacy glass and power folding door mirrors, halogen headlamps and LED day running lights and I'm a huge fan of Ford's quick-clear heated front screens, why aren't they standard on every car?

On the safety side Ford is leaving no-

ing to chance with all-round airbags, keyless start, hill-start assist and Thatcham category 1 alarm.

Ford has been carefully pricing its fleet in recent years and this model is very competitive at £22,520, though sat nav and parking sensors pushed the price of the test car up to £22,995.

There's a growing market out there for the colour co-ordinated and this Focus fits the bill. Expect to see plenty on our roads.

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REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE: KIA PICANTO 1.0 '1' 3DR*

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CARS OF THE WEEK

FORD FOCUS 1.5 TDCI ZETEC S/S 120



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CITROEN DS4 1.6 HDI DSTYLE 6 SPEED DIESEL, WHITE, ALLOYS, CD PLAYER, AIR CON, POWER STEERING, ELECTRIC WINDOWS, SEAT MASSAGER, CRUISE CONTROL, BLUETOOTH, LOADS OF EXTRAS, EXCELLENT MPG, IMMACULATE CONDITION



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Motoring



Superb estate puts boot in

The Skoda Superb has won yet another accolade from the motoring press. The Sunday Times has named the Superb estate as the Best Large Estate car on the market as part of its annual Top 100 Cars special.

Seeing off considerably more expensive competition to take the top spot, the Superb impressed the judging panel with its elegant design, sector-best practicality and incredible value for money. Comprising writers and reviewers from The Sunday Times Driving supplement and website, the judging team chose the 2.0 TDI 150PS SE L Executive as its pick of the range.

Škoda also performed strongly in other categories in the supplement, with top three recommendations for Fabia and Octavia estate in the Supermini and Mid-size Estate sectors plus a top five finish for Citigo in the City Car sector.

Commenting on the Superb's win, The Sunday Times judging panel said: "If you want maximum carrying capacity for minimum cash, this is where you need to be looking. If your priority is a huge boot, the Superb will also appeal, as it can stow the same amount of baggage as the Mercedes E-Class – a hefty 1,950 litres."

Focusing on the Superb's value for money, the judges added: "Prices for this Skoda start at less than £20,000. You can upgrade to a version with more toys and muscle by spending a little more than £25,000, but that's still small beer for something so capable."

Duncan Movassaghi, brand director for Skoda UK said: "We're delighted that The Sunday Times has recognised the Superb estate for its incredible all-round ability. It's a very special car that embodies everything we strive for at ŠKODA – powerful design, unbeatable practicality and great value."

The new Superb was launched in the UK last September, and has already collected a number of high-profile industry awards. These include Auto Express Family Car of the Year, Scottish Estate Car of the Year and CarBuyer Best Estate Car 2015. Prices for the Superb hatch start at £18,640, while the estate range starts from £19,840.

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SEPT 15	M235i Convertible 3.0	Alpine White Non-Metallic	£41,080	£33,950	£7,130	5.9% APR
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OCT 15	116d Sport 5-door Sports Hatch 1.5d	Alpine White Non-Metallic	£24,210	£20,950	£3,260	5.9% APR
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OCT 15	218i Sport Active Tourer 1.5	Mineral Grey Metallic	£27,875	£24,450	£3,425	5.9% APR
OCT 15	218i Luxury Gran Tourer 1.5i	Alpine White Non-Metallic	£30,180	£25,950	£4,230	2.9% APR
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DEC 15	520d M Sport Saloon 2.0	Carbon Black Metallic	£41,330	£31,950	£9,380	5.9% APR
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DEC 15	320d M Sport Saloon 2.0d	Glacier Silver Metallic	£37,485	£30,950	£6,535	5.9% APR
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Defender Wells on move to Newtown

THE New Saints central defender Jordan Wells has switched to Welsh Premier rivals Newtown on loan for the rest of the season.

Wells, who has yet to make a league appearance for TNS, spent time on loan at Carmarthen Town last season, making four appearances and scoring once.

The 19-year-old, who is the younger brother of former Robins' defender Ashley Wells who retired from the game last season, has also spent time on-loan with Conwy Borough this season.

"We are delighted to bring in a signing such as Jordan, who has already had experience in the Welsh Premier League," said Newtown manager Chris Hughes.

"He has been impressing the coaches at TNS and has been on the fringes of the first team, so we are pleased he can come in and add something to our squad.

"Injuries have been a problem for us all season, so to have Jordan coming in to battle for a place will only help the squad."

Wells made his debut for the Robins in their 3-0 defeat at Bangor City that left their hopes of sealing a top six place hanging in the balance.

It was their second defeat at the hands of the Citizens this season, having been well beaten by the same scoreline at home a few months back.

Despite improving after the interval, they could have few complaints after succumbing to first goals from Sion Edwards and Ryan Edwards before Porya Ahmadi settled the issue in the last minute.

■ John Carroll, a former assistant manager at TNS in the early 2000s, has passed away.

Carroll was assistant manager to Ken McKenna for a number of seasons during the club's time at their Treflan ground in Llansantffraid.

An experienced coach and manager, Carroll was in charge at Halifax Town, Runcorn and Gateshead before joining TNS.

COBRA left frustrated once again

COBRA were served with more frustration as their Swalec Plate second round tie away to Whitland was postponed a second time through a waterlogged ground.

The Meifod men had been due to play the tie before Christmas but it was called off with the team already en route to Carmarthen-shire.

And it was a similar fate on Saturday with the clash called off again, although this time the players had yet to start the journey south.

"It's a bit of a pain, but there's not much we can do about it," said a club spokesman.

"It's a long journey down there for which we were already struggling to get a side as players have taken time off work to go down. The fact it's been called off twice now will make it even tougher to get a side out next time."

That next time has been scheduled by the WRU for Saturday - the conference date for the third round - when it is hoped it will be third time lucky, although the tie has yet to be confirmed.

WELSHPOOL'S trip to Holyhead in the Swalec Welsh League division three (north) suffered a similar fate to the rest of the games in the region with the action called off due to a waterlogged surface.

Four-star St Martins shake off the rust

DESPITE having played just once in five weeks, St Martins made light of their inactivity as they inflicted a 4-1 beating on Bartestree to consolidate their top five position in the West Midlands League division one.

The Saints were soon in their stride with some excellent play in the clash at Park Hall, forcing the visiting keeper into making a couple of early saves.

And their efforts were rewarded as they took a 25th minute lead with a penalty from Jamie

Hands after striker Karl Bailey had been tripped as he raced towards goal.

Six minutes after the break, another good move saw Dean Graham crash home a fine strike from outside the box to double the hosts advantage.

With Josh Sumner impressing in midfield, substitute Dan Graham then made it 3-0 on 70 minutes, latching onto a poor clearance from the keeper before lobbing into an empty net from 25 yards.

Bartestree pulled one back seven minutes from

time as home keeper Jake Northwood saved a free kick from the edge of the box, but the loose ball fell for rightback Nick Weaver to convert.

However, the Saints had the final word as they wrapped up victory three minutes later when Bailey steered into the net after the visiting keeper had failed to hold.

It was the perfect start to the year for St Martins, but they will face a bigger test on Saturday when they head to runaway division one leaders AFC Ludlow.

Llanfair out of cup despite pitch switch

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

LLANFAIR United's interest in the Huws Gray Cup came to an end after suffering a 4-1 loss to Gresford Athletic in a rain-drenched quarter-final at Newtown.

After the tie had been switched to the 4G surface at Latham Park due to the weather, it was fellow league new boss Gresford who took their chance to progress in front of a bumper crowd.

After most games elsewhere had been postponed due to the recent deluge, Llanfair were glad of some action having played little in the last couple of months.

Yet, despite a reply from Chris Gethin, they succumbed to two goals from Owen Roberts and further strikes by Jack Montford and Sam Richardson as Athletic secured their place in the last four.

Gresford started the brighter and deservedly took the lead after 25 minutes through Roberts' opening goal of the game.

Llanfair rallied and enjoyed a good 10-minute spell as they clawed their way back into the tie when Gethin finished from close range following a Marc Jones cross.

However, Gresford were soon back on top and rattled the crossbar before a Mountford finish over advancing keeper Lee Andrew saw them regain the lead.

Long range

The visitors quickly tightened their grip as a low long range effort from Roberts for his second of the game made it 3-1 before the break.

The second half proved a bit of a wash-out as torrential rain hampered the play, even on the artificial pitch, as both teams struggled to contend with the conditions.

But Gresford were home and dry after extending their advantage to 4-1 on 75 minutes when new signing Richardson scored from close range to complete the scoring.

Llanfair now turn their thoughts to league survival in the coming months, starting with a crucial trip to Porthmadog on Saturday in their quest to escape the bottom three.

GUILDSFIELD - who were due to host Holywell Town in the Huws Gray Cymru Alliance - suffered a washout to frustrate their hopes of making ground on the leaders.

However, they did manage a friendly with West Midlands League premier division high fliers Shawbury United.

Guilds player boss Dan Barton scored for his side in the 1-1 draw against the Shropshire side after having a 90-minute runout in the game played on the artificial pitch at the London Road Sports Centre in Shrewsbury.

Dream start to year for Town



FC Oswestry Town defender Alun Morris gets up to challenge the Allscott keeper. Pic: Ian Jones.

THE year could hardly have started much better for FC Oswestry Town who moved three points clear at the top of the Mer-cian Regional League premier division with a crucial 2-1 success at title rivals Allscott.

It was a big win for Nick Maguire's side whose side dug deep to return with the spoils against a side that had started the day in pole position on goal difference.

Allscott had started brightly with the aid of a strong breeze, but Town stood firm for opening period, carving the best chances in the early stages with strikers Paul Bache and Chris Bishop both going close following some fine work from Cal Williams,

However, on 30 minutes, it was the hosts who took the lead with a long range effort which dipped under the bar to beat keeper Paul Morris.

This advantage did not last long and just three minutes later Town levelled when winger Guy Guilford spotted the keeper off his line and chipped home from a full 30 yards wide on the left.

Attitude

The second half saw both teams create opportunities, but Town keeper Paul Morris was in fine form along with the back four of Elliott Howes, Rob Shone, Alun Morris and Joe Evans.

The midfield battles were now

being won by Rich Morris and captain Oly Jones, and the visitors scored a crucial second with just 10 minutes on the clock.

Sub Tommy Lewis spotted Bishop making a run between two defenders and his great ball set up the prolific scorer to slot past the keeper from 15 yards.

Town - who have no game this weekend - held on for the last 10 minutes to secure all three points and claim top spot.

Manager Nick Maguire was thrilled with the win as he praised his players' effort and attitude that will put the Oswestry side in good stead for the second half of the season as they chase the title and promotion.

Six of the best from the TNS Ladies side

TNS Ladies 6 Lye Town 0
TITLE-CHASING The New Saints Ladies started the year on the front foot as they hit Lye Town Ladies for six to maintain the pressure on the leaders in the West Midlands Ladies League premier division.

The convincing 6-0 victory, in a game played on the Shrewsbury College 3G pitch, kept the Saints well placed in third, three points off top, with two games in hand on leaders Crusaders.

Joe Thompson's side are still unbeaten this term with six wins and two draws from their eight games.

They never looked back after taking the lead just a few minutes into the game when a teasing ball from the right hand side saw the Lye defender put past her own goalkeeper.

With just 19 minutes on the clock, the Saints doubled their lead when a well struck effort from leading goal scorer Emily Ridge flew into the net.

The Saints upped the tempo at the start of the second half and just two minutes after the break Maddie Jones slotted a third goal.

Jones then added her second on the hour when breaking free of the Lye defence to fire past the keeper, before Ridge, with her second of the game, and Sarah Burke rounded off the scoring.

"It was nice to be back on the pitch today, coming up against a good Lye side, resilient and quick on the break, but we played some good football today," said manager Joe Thompson.

"Our link up play was excellent and we took our chances well. I am very pleased with the performance and Sam Berry had a hand in all the goals."

■ TNS under-19s are hanging onto the coat-tails of the leaders in the Welsh Premier Development League (north) after running out comfortable 4-0 victors at home to Flint Town United.

Victory maintained the Saints' unbeaten run with nine wins and two draws, and they remain one point behind high flying Bangor City who have won all 10 outings this term, and have played one game less.

TNS took the lead on the half hour when Matt Perry's cross from the right was headed goalwards by Lewis Evans and the ball deflected into the net off Flint defender Niall Roberts.

The advantage was doubled on 62 minutes when Nyasha Mwamuka lobbed the advancing keeper after latching onto a long through ball from Michael Owen.

Evans then made it 3-0 seven minutes later, tapping in a cross from substitute Christoph Aziamale.

Victory was wrapped up eight minutes for time when Lewis notched his second of the game with a curling strike.

Weather wins again as only two games on

THE wet weather again had a big impact on the Spar Mid Wales League programme with all but two games washed out.

Of those to survive the deluge, **FOUR CROSSES** took advantage to lift themselves off the foot of the second division table with a 7-3 home beating of basement rivals Penybont at the Foxen Manor.

In the other game, 10-man Knighton Town were 2-0 winners over Llandrindod Wells in their derby clash to move up to fourth spot in division one, just two points off leaders Penrhynoch.

MONTGOMERY'S Central Wales Cup third round tie at Aberystwyth University was also off due to the weather, the match being re-scheduled for Saturday (1.45).

Other ties to be played see Waterlo Roovers host Llansantffraid Village, and in-form Berriew visit Dyffryn Ban.

Elsewhere, Kerry host Llilanlar and Abermule make the trip to New Quay.

Frustrated Morda suffer a washout

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

Rovers at Treflan in the JT Hughes Montgomeryshire League division two.

Nathan Proddger and Steve Tomkins were on target for the home side with Kamal Lloyd-Jones scoring twice for Newtown.

In the only other second division game to survive the continued wet weather, Newtown Wanderers and Berriew Reserves drew 5-5 at Latham Park. Adam Knight, Bryan Carr, Ryan Jenkins and Luke Weaver (2) were on the mark for Berriew.

Meanwhile, in the only games in the Honda division one, Llanfyllin went down 2-1 at home to Llanyrnnech who took the spoils through

Matt Jones and Jack Watkins while Tamir Law responded.

■■■■

TNS Foundation will be providing football sessions at St Martins Primary School in the coming weeks.

The Football sessions, which will run every Friday from 3.15pm-14.15pm, will take place in the Sports hall and will cost £3.50.

Children from the school will also be given tickets to watch the Dafabet Welsh Premier League Champions over the course of the season and will continue to be coached by the TNS FC Foundation coaches.

For more information please contact Jason Brindley on 01691684840 or email Jason.Brindley@tnsfc.co.uk

Leaders Llansantffraid Village were forced to settle for a 2-2 draw with rival challengers Newtown

National success for local trainer

A HORSE trained in Mid Wales has raced into the history books by winning the Chepstow Welsh Grand National for the second time in three years, **writes JOHN BRIDGWATER**.

Mountainous previously won the race in 2013 when it was co-owned by Welshpool-based James Potter to the delight of local punters.

Potter has since sold his share in the horse, trained by Kerry Lee at Byton, near Presteigne, but the success was repeated in this season's Welsh Grand National.

"He's not had a lot of racing," Lee said.

"He really enjoys the way he is trained. The thing is to keep him sweet, to keep him fresh and keep the variety going.

"I think the Grand National has to be his target now this season, he really enjoys soft ground and this kind of trip, so it has to be on the cards."

Under jockey Jamie Moore, the 11-year-old never looked back after hitting the front with three fences to go, keeping the lead from Firebird Flyer (25-1) and Shotgun Paddy (12-1) who came home in second and third respectively.

The 9-1 shot, who won by three-quarter lengths, is the first double winner of the race since Bonanza Boy in 1989.

Limonali is the only other two-time winner of the race, having also won it twice in three Nationals in 1959 and 1961.

The race was postponed from December 27 because of a waterlogged track, and the rescheduled date had been under threat after recent prolonged rain again made the going heavy.

Haughmond can put boot in Wellington

HAUGHMOND have to wait until next Wednesday to resume their encouraging West Midlands League premier division when they face a Shropshire derby at lowly Wellington Amateurs, **writes STUART DUNN**.

Matt Burton's side climbed to second place in the table – three points behind leaders Shawbury United, albeit having played three more games – after hitting the goal trail with a vengeance on their first Shrewsbury Sports Village appearance of the season last Wednesday night.

Dudley Town were on the receiving end of a Haughmond goal avalanche as the hosts coasted to an emphatic 8-1 victory.

Centre-forward Dave Howarth led the way with a five-goal salvo while strike partner Steve Hole, Adam Davies and Scott Graham also weighed in.

The premier division games involving Shawbury and Ellesmere Rangers last weekend were both victims of waterlogged pitches – Shawbury at Wellington Amateurs and Ellesmere at Bromyard.

Rangers welcome fourth-placed Cradley Town to Beech Grove on Saturday while Shawbury are at home to Wellington, 11th.

Ellesmere are also scheduled to play next Wednesday night when they have a Shropshire derby at AFC Bridgnorth.

Meanwhile, Wem Town will hope to get the green light for a long-awaited return to action in the first division of the West Midlands League at FC Stafford on Saturday.

Josh Gough's side, currently eighth in the table, are also due to hit the road, to Wrens Next, this coming Tuesday night.

Wem have not played since a 2-1 victory at Bustleholme on December 12.

Elsewhere, Whitchurch Alport, rock-bottom of division one of the North West Counties League, take on eighth-placed Northwich Manchester Villa at Yockings Park on Saturday.

Alport had no scheduled game last weekend.

Home stars in money at grand event

FIVE Grandmasters came, five Grandmasters played, and five Grandmasters conquered – that was the story of the strongest ever Shropshire Chess Congress which attracted 135 competitors from far and wide, **writes TOBY NEAL**.

But while the first prize at £1,000 on offer in the Open section was the biggest ever, the Grandmasters had to be content to share the spoils five ways, with each taking home £290 – the individual amount was bumped up because no second or third prizes were awarded.

Two Shropshire players, Telepost's Nigel Ferrington, and Oswestry's Richard Bryant, finished the weekend tournament at the Wrekin Housing Trust

in Telford on three points out of five, a highly creditable performance in a field which included those Grandmasters, as well as International Masters and FIDE Masters, which are the next ranks down from GM. They shared the trophy for best performance by a Shropshire player.

The GM winners were Keith Arkell, Danny Gormally, Jahongir Vakhidov of Uzbekistan, Stephen Gordon, and Mark Hebden.

The latter ground out a 110-move win in the final round with bishop, rook, and pawn versus bishop and rook, making for perhaps the latest finish in the event's history as a result this year of the introduction of incremental time controls, which makes

games open ended by giving players 30 seconds extra every time they make a move.

Bryant shared the under-2000 grading prize with Golan Ali.

While there was never any chance of a Shropshire player winning such a star-studded Open, Michal Bukojemski flew the flag for Shropshire and Church Stretton in the Major section, where he was one of four joint winners, on four points out of five, with each taking home £150.

The other winners were Robert Clegg (Huddersfield), Ed Goodwin (Coventry), and Ben Graff (Kenilworth). Athar Mehmood of Newport won the grading prize.

Eagles flying after fine win at leaders

RUGBY by John Bridgwater

OSWESTRY boosted their title prospects in rugby's Cheshire South after pulling off an excellent 19-5 victory away to one of their chief rivals Dukinfield.

Success against the Greater Manchester men, their 11th win of the season, sees the Eagles remain third, five points behind leaders Manchester Medics, but with a game in hand.

A big Dukinfield outfit, who started the day in pole position, were soon on the attack as they combined aggression and pace, forcing the Eagles into some early gutsy defence close to their line.

Flanker Zac Baldwin and the pack were putting bodies on the line to keep their hosts at bay, before the Eagles started to get a foothold in the game.

Some terrific moves, handling and off-loading saw them advance closer to the Dukinfield try line in the muddy conditions, with captain Andy Smith urging his team onward.

Baldwin, who had gone off for a brief time with a blood injury, continued to make his presence felt in the ruck and mauls.

A string of penalties in the heavy penalties saw Oswestry take the lead courtesy of a well struck kick from fly half Fin Grogan.

But Dukinfield got their noses in front when a cheeky grubber kick found its way through the Eagles defence, and the home winger picked up the bobbling ball to score an unconverted try in the corner.

Despite the setback, Oswestry were gaining in confidence in their play as they started to push forward with quick ball to backs Andy Merrett, Sam Wright, Nick Clay and Jamie Luckett.

Pressure

The visitors were also now winning line out ball with No8 James Booth rising to the challenge as they cranked up the pressure.

Dukinfield, down to 14 men through a yellow card, were now making mistakes and another penalty conceded saw Grogan kick a second penalty sweetly through the posts for a 6-5 lead.

The home side battled hard looking to regain the lead, but Oswestry had different ideas with scrum half Hamish Fuller, Grogan and Luca Owen-Youens time and again clearing ball and creating spaces for the visiting pack to gain ground.

And the team efforts paid off when man-of-the-match Merrett touched down for a fine try from a clearance, Baldwin following up to make sure, with Grogan converting from a difficult angle.

With Dukinfield penalised for a high tackle, Grogan added another penalty to increase the advantage to 16-5 at the interval.

Frustrated, the home side were looking to rattle the Eagles - but the visitors held firm with excellent all round play and defence.

Both sides lost players to the sin bin, but the momentum was with Oswestry who were again on the move towards the home line, with Grogan adding another penalty to effectively seal the win after Dukinfield were caught offside.

Victory saw Oswestry keep up the pressure on the pacesetters in the Cheshire South, with two games in hand on Dukinfield and one on Manchester Medics who moved top courtesy of a 54-17 mauling of Linley.

Crucially, the Eagles still have to play the Medics at home, but before then they host struggling Knutsford on Saturday (2.15) as they look for a maximum haul of points.

Olympians' runners make mark



Oswestry Olympians under-15 girls team of Kate Pugh, Abigail Walmsley and Ellie Dixon

RUNNERS from Oswestry Olympians again put their best foot forward in the final Shropshire Young Athletes Cross Country League meeting at Packwood Haugh School in Ruyton XI Towns.

With individual and team medals at stake, there was pressure on the leading athletes to produce their best performances on boggy terrain after heavy rainfall.

And they made their mark with under-17 Cameron Van Onselen involved in the closest finish of the day with the front runner changing several times throughout the five kilometre race.

It culminated in a hard-fought

sprint finish with Van Onselen narrowly being edged out to claim the silver medal overall, but consolation was that his performance helped the under-17 boys team win their age group overall.

Another Oswestry athlete battling for honours was Liam Rawlings in the under-13 boys competition where he finished second on the day, but won his age group overall.

There were team medals for the under-11 boys who finished second overall for the season, while the under-15 girls were also second and the under-13 boys third.

The Olympians runners will again be looking to impress in the

Shropshire County Cross Country Championships at Attingham Park.

Results (Oswestry Olympian runners)

Under-11 girls: Demi Williams 11, Heidi Lantos 35, Jasmine Evans 36. Team 7th, season overall 6th.

Under-11 boys: Henry Walmsley 7, Oliver Roach 8, Massimo Wyatt 22, Sam Newton 29, Tom Hotchkiss 36. Team 4th, overall 2nd.

Under-13 girls: Bethan Jones 9, Mia Tate 21, Elin Lloyd-Davies 29, Megan Jones 31, Anna Rothera 32. Team 5th, overall 5th.

Under-13 boys: Liam Rawlings 2, Evan Roberts 28, Jannick Jones 30. Team 5th, overall 3rd.

Under-15 girls: Abagael Walmsley 6, Kate Pugh 7, Ellie Dixon 19. Team 4th, overall 2nd.

Under-15 boys: Tom Wilde 4, Matthew Collins 17, Team 5th, overall 6th.

Under-17 boys: Cameron Van Onselen 2, Owen Williams 8. Team 2nd, overall 1st



The under-13 boys team runners Jannick Jones, Liam Rawlings and Evan Roberts who came third

Hat-trick of wins sees ladies up to fifth

A **THIRD** straight win maintained Oswestry Ladies' revival as they moved up to fifth spot in the Cheshire Women's Hockey League division two with a 2-1 home verdict against lowly Bebbington Ladies.

After a mixed start to the season, fortunes are looking up for the ladies whose latest success followed victories against Triton Ladies (3-0) and Brooklands Poynton Ladies III (2-1) at the end of last year.

They now face another side below them in the table when they visit Macclesfield Ladies II on Saturday as they look to maintain their winning start to 2016.

With a full squad of 16, Oswestry started well, putting pressure on the Bebbington goal and were unlucky to see a number of shots flash past the post and miss final touches on threatening passes.

However, their opponents soon warmed into the game as Oswestry showed some signs of rustiness after the break and failed push on in the way they would have liked.

Despite some close moments for both teams, the score remained 0-0 at half time, but the hosts were determined to put in a strong second half performance to try and gain the win.

Frustrated

Bebbington were becoming increasingly frustrated both on the pitch and their supporters on the sidelines, voicing their opinions increasingly vocally.

Oswestry soaked up some early pressure but were unlucky to concede first when the visitors reacted first to a rebound.

But the home side kept calm and continued to press forward in their quest for an equaliser.

This pressure resulted in a short corner where a well worked passing routine was well finished by Tracey Royle to level the scores.

Shortly after, they surged forward again and were rewarded with another short corner which was dispatched by Lisa Bladen to catch the top of the backboard to give her side the lead.

Following this, Oswestry continued to generate promising opportunities but were unable to find the final touch needed to extend their lead.

As the match drew to a close, Bebbington had a more concerted period of attack, but the home defence stood firm and were able to withstand the pressure and win the game.

Hockey men produce five star display

IT was high fives for Oswestry's hockey players who eased to a 5-1 home victory over Droitwich Spa at the Marches School in the West Midlands Hockey League division one.

In their first action of the year, Town consolidated their top five place with a sixth win of the campaign, and had enough chances to have finished more emphatic winners.

Boosted by the return of Dale Seymour, the hosts were ahead through Jack Morgan before the visitors fired a leveller

However, Oswestry were back in front courtesy of Jody Wilson and it was 3-1 at the interval with Will Evans on target.

Morgan made it four after the interval with his second of the game, while the forward also missed further chances including a penalty flick, while Gareth Ker-shaw completed the nap hand.

Boosted by their first win of 2016, Oswestry look to maintain the momentum away to Pershore on Saturday, but will be without keeper Dave Prince.

Sport

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Rugby
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New Saints mind GAP with league set to split

THE New Saints will look to wrap up the first phase of the Dafabet Welsh Premier season by maintaining their unbeaten campaign in Saturday's trip to Gap Connah's Quay (5.15pm), writes **JOHN BRIDGWATER**.

This weekend's fixture marks the last before the 12-team league splits into two divisions of six for the second half of the season.

The Saints are flying high, nine points clear of nearest rivals Bala Town in second, and boss Craig Harrison will want his side to keep their firm grip on the title race.

Saturday's trip to Connah's Quay could represent a tricky end to the first half of the season for the defending champions, with their hosts needing a point to qualify for the top six.

But the Saints are in good shape, having had a free week in which to recharge their batteries and shake off any injury niggles ahead of the run-in.

TNS have a good record away to Quay where they have lost just twice in the league in over 20 years. Their first defeat at the Deeside Stadium came way back in 1993-94, their first season in the league, and they went 16 years before suffering their next reverse when losing 1-0 on February 5, 2010.

But Harrison, who took the chance to watch four games last week, feels his side will have to be at their best on Saturday against their improving hosts.

"They have done really well since their new boss Andy Morrison took over. They've had a bit of a resurgence, so it's going to be a tough game for us," he said. "But we have a lot of belief and desire in the side, and are determined to keep our unbeaten record going."

The Saints can boast a tremendous record in their last 100 games in all competitions, which has seen 71 wins, 23 draws and just six defeats, with 255 goals scored and 77 conceded.

But Harrison is not resting on his laurels, and has indicated he is looking to bring in new signings to bolster his squad during the January transfer window as he looks to repeat last season's historic treble triumph.

It's a big month for the Saints who can lift their first silverware of the season when they tackle Denbigh Town in the final of the Word Cup at Llandudno the following week, with a 5.15pm kick-off in front of the S4C cameras.

Runner Davies up against Mo Farah

FORDEN marathon runner Andrew Davies again put his best foot forward as he rubbed shoulders with some of the sport's big names in the Great Edinburgh Cross-Country International.

Among those competing was double Olympic champion Mo Farah who was beaten into second by American Garret Heath, while Davies secured an impressive 18th place out of the best 30 runners from Europe, USA and Great Britain. Great Britain won the team event with Europe second and USA third.

Man City scouts head for Oswestry

YOUNG footballers from the region are being given the chance to play in front of scouts from one of the world's biggest clubs.

Premier League giants Manchester City have teamed up with Shropshire-based Ball Sports Community Coaching to deliver football sessions in Oswestry.

The first sessions will take the form of open development trials in the town at The Marches School on Fridays January 15 and 22, and anyone aged between five and 16 years old can register to attend.

Neil Prescott, of Ball Sports Community Coaching, said the partnership with Manchester

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

City – home of England and former Shrewsbury Town goalkeeper, Joe Hart – was great news for youngsters.

"We have been talking with Man City for some time and we are delighted to be able to offer this opportunity to young footballers in Shropshire," he said.

"Scouts from Man City will be at the open trials in January so it's an amazing chance to play in front of representatives from one of the biggest clubs in the world.

"The aim is that we will then hold regular development sessions with players filtering through into the Man City youth system."

Prescott said the partnership would have benefits for everyone connected with Ball Sports, whether they attended the football sessions or not.

"A big part of the relationship will be the development of our own coaching ethos," he added.

"We will be working closely with Man City and learning from them about their philosophies which can only be a good thing for every child who comes on a Ball Sports course, regardless of their ability."

EAGLES TARGET LEAGUE TITLE

BUOYANT Oswestry have emerged serious title challengers in rugby's Cheshire South after making a bold statement to their rivals in the first action of 2016.

The Eagles underlined their credentials with a hard-fought 19-5 victory in the mud at one of the leading challengers Dukinfield to consolidate third spot, writes **JOHN BRIDGWATER**.

With a game in hand, that win leaves Os five points behind pacesetters Manchester Medics who they have to play at home in a potential title decider at the end of this month.

Before then, Oswestry welcome rock bottom Knutsford on Saturday, (2.15pm) with the Cheshire side arriving at Granville Park without a win to their names this season.

An anticipated maximum haul of points would increase the pressure on the leaders, with the Eagles faithful firmly believing their side can lift the Cheshire South crown this term.

With some 12 games remaining, they are exactly half way through their campaign, having so far reeled off 11 wins and suffering just one defeat – the least amount of losses in the division.

Although there is still a long way to go, they can take heart from this creditable record – and the muddy victory over Dukinfield last week.

"There's a real feeling that we can win the league this season, we're going for it," said spokesman Martin Ord.

"The club's buzzing, we've won eight games in a row and, after last Saturday, we feel we have a great chance of getting promotion.

"We have two games in hand on Dukinfield, and one on the Medics who we play at the end of the month in what could well be the title decider."

Some teams may have protested that the pitch was unplayable, but Oswestry were determined to show their worth against uncompromising opponents.

It was a case of digging deep, with man-of-the-match Andy Merrett scoring a crucial try, while the reliable boot of fly half Pin Grogan contributed four penalties and a conversion as the visitors opened up a lead they never looked likely to relinquish.

Netball star visits Ellesmere



Natalie Panagarry (centre) with Ellesmere College pupils (from left): Kate Williamson, Anna Underwood, Tilly Walker and Francesca-Hughes

LEADING netball star Natalie Panagarry was on hand to give Ellesmere College pupils a special training session under her expert eye.

Panagarry, one of the most talented players in this year's Superleague, made the visit as Sky Sports celebrates a bumper season by launching "Netball Month" this January.

A strong leader both on and off the court, the Loughborough Lightning squad player demonstrated her netball skills while also holding attacking play training sessions for the college teams.

Panagarry is the former Yorkshire Jets captain/senior squad member and has coached a variety of levels – BUCS Leeds Metropolitan

head coach, under-14 Leeds club coach and Harrogate Ladies College under-14 to under-18 teams.

"It's lovely to be asked to host a few sessions at Ellesmere College. I have heard a lot of good things about the school and everyone seems to have enjoyed my coaching," she said.

"All the netball teams were really keen to learn a few new skills."

College netball coach Tina Cox said: "We have regular guest coaches from international teams that visit the college and it's great to have Natalie taking a few sessions."

"She is at the top of her sport and our teams really enjoyed the sessions."

Guils boss wants two new faces

GUILSFIELD are poised to bolster their squad this week as they look to maintain their challenge in both league and cup.

Boss Dan Barton has lined up a centre-half and a forward, which he hopes to complete ahead of Saturday's Huws Gray Cymru Alliance clash at home to Mold Alex.

After last weekend's home encounter with Holywell Town was postponed due to waterlogged pitch, it's as you were in the leading places with the Guils remaining in seventh spot, just three points adrift of the Wellmen in third.

Despite the wet weather, Guilsfield managed to arrange a friendly with West Midlands premier league high fliers Shawbury United on the 3G at Shrewsbury College.

"It was a good workout for us," said manager Barton who scored his side's goal in the 1-1 draw with their Shropshire opponents.

"We were able to rest a few players while giving some of the other lads a chance. At the same time we could take a look at a couple of possible new signings which we hope to tie up this week."

He added: "We've got a big month coming up, with matches against Caernarfon and Caersws and then the Welsh Cup against Airbus UK."

"It's important we keep our run going, so it's a big game against Mold. Despite their league position, they're a decent side and caused us a few problems when we played them earlier in the season when we drew 1-1."

Llanfair focus on climbing the table

LLANFAIR UNITED may be out of the Cymru Alliance Cup – but boss Rhys Stephens knows that the real struggle starts now as his side battle for league survival.

United were well beaten 4-1 by fellow league newcomers Gresford Athletic on the 4G at Newtown to miss the chance of a place in the league cup semi-finals.

But Stephens' focus is on escaping basement danger in the Cymru Alliance, with his side returning to league action in a big game at Porthmadog on Saturday.

Following a string of postponements, Llanfair remain third from bottom and with everything to play for in the second half of the season.

"Although we have had a lot of postponements, we're not miles behind in games as the weather has been the same everywhere," said Stephens.

"No excuses, Gresford battered us last week. But it's a cup game out of the way, and the players got 90 proper minutes under their belts which is what they needed with so many big league games coming up."

"We've now got Porthmadog and Mold away, and Rhayader Town at home. I'm not one for setting targets, but these are big games for us."

"We haven't drawn this season, we look to win every game – but if we can get a point at Porthmadog, then we'll be happy with that."

Iain Edmunds, who was cup-tied last weekend, is back in contention along with Rob Bennett.

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Skoda's great car range

The mainstream Skoda range has been building a reputation for itself with stylish models that offer reliable, well-built cars that are great value for money.

The Skoda Citigo does everything it needs to and more. It looks good, offers plenty of space, a keen enough drive and seems very well screwed together.

Skoda ups the ante with its third-generation Fabia, introducing sharper, more assertive styling and clever tech that the company hopes will bring down the average age of its customers.

A Skoda Octavia was once the least sophisticated of all the Volkswagen Group's family hatchback products. Not any more. Almost nothing has been held back for this third generation version.

Skoda has re-focused itself on the family

hatchback segment with this Rapid, bigger and better value than most of its Golf and Astra-sized competitors. Rapidity may not be high on this car's agenda but with proven mechanicals and a refreshing lack of gimmickry, it aims to appeal to an assured kind of buyer.

Skoda's improved Roomster continues to compete against van-based mini-MPVs but it certainly doesn't look like one. It's as versatile too – and as spacious. If you're searching for a small car but need it to be practical, affordable and just that little bit different, then this little Skoda could be what you're looking for.

Skoda's MK3 model Superb gets a smarter suit, a slicker chassis and better engines. The weird twin-opening hatch is replaced by a more conventional rear aperture but there's still more space inside than in some London starter homes and the pricing remains sensible.



New showroom for Skoda



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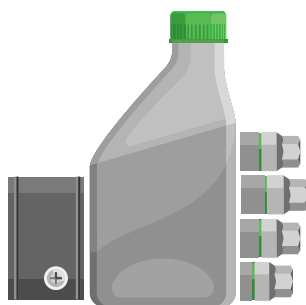
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"Furrows has been in Oswestry for over 50 years. In that period we have invested heavily in the town and will continue investing for the long term future with exciting new developments," said Mr David Farthing, group sales manager.

There will be an official opening of the new showroom on Friday, January 22 with a hog roast and refreshments. There will also be a raffle with the main prize a weekend drive in the new Skoda Superb.

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